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ELEMENTS

OF GENERAL HISTORY

ANCIENT AND MODERN.

BY THE ABBE MILLOT.

WITH THE CONTINUATION FROM MDCCLX TO THE YEAR MDCCCXV, BY M. PROFESSOR MILLON OF PARIS.

A NEW EDITION REVISED.

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CONTENTS OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

CONTINUATION OF THE ROMAN HISTORY.

SEVENTH EPOCH.

THE SUBJUGATION OF CARTHAGE. OPPRESSION OF FOREIGN NATIONS BY THE ROMANS.

From the year of Rome five hundred and fifty to six hundred and twenty.

PAGE

I. Wars against Philip king of Macedon, and Antiochus king of Syria . . 3

II. Cato the Censor. War against Persia. Injustice and Ambition of the Romans . 10

III. The Third Punic War. The Romans destroy Carthage, Corinth, and Numantia . 18

IV. Observations upon the Army, the Manners, the Finances, and Learning of the Romans 26

EIGHTH EPOCH.

THE GRACCHI. THE CORRUPTION OF THE REPUBLIC.

From the year of Rome six hundred and twenty to the year six hundred and sixty-five.

I. The Tribuneship of Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, and others . . . . p. 34
II. The Wickedness of Jugurtha. He corrupts the Senate. War declared against that Prince 44
III. Invasion of the Cimbri and Teutones. Dreadful Corruption of the Republic. The Social War 51

NINTH EPOCH.

THE CIVIL WARS. RUIN OF THE REPUBLIC.

From the year of Rome six hundred and sixty-five to seven hundred and twenty-four.

I. Marius and Sylla begin the Civil War. 60
II. The Expeditions of Sylla into Greece and Asia. Mithridates a formidale Enemy to Rome 66
III. Return of Sylla. His Proscriptions. His Dictatorship, and his Death . . . 72
IV. The War of Sertorius. Spartacus at the head of a body of Slaves. Pompey defeats the Pirates 78
V. The War of Mithridates ended. Lucullus supplanted by Pompey . . . 84

VI. Conspiracy of Catiline. The Triumvirate of Pompey, Crassus, and Cæsar . p. 90
VII. Conquest of Gaul. Breach between Cæsar and Pompey. A Civil War . 98
VIII. Cæsar makes himself master of the Republic. His Death . . . 104
IX. Daring policy of Octavius. The Triumvirate. Battle of Philippi, in which the Republican party was destroyed . 112
X. The misconduct of Antony turned by Octavius to his own advantage. Battle of Actium, and termination of the Republic 120

TENTH EPOCH.

THE EMPERORS. THE REPUBLIC CHANGED INTO A MILITARY MONARCHY, COMPREHENDING THE PERIOD OF THE EMPERORS.

AUGUSTUS.

I. Reign of Augustus till the Death of Agrippa 125
II. Wars in Germany. End of the Reign of Augustus. Laws and Literature . 133

TIBERIUS.

I. From the Accession of Tiberius till the Death of Germanicus and Piso . . 144
II. Government of Tiberius till the Conspiracy of Sejanus 152
III. Conspiracy of Sejanus. End of the Reign of Tiberius 158
CALIGULA 165
CLAUDIUS 168
NERO 179

I. From Nero's Accession till the War in Britain . . . p. 179
II. War in Great Britain. Affairs of Rome till the first Conspiracy . . . 186
III. End of Nero's Reign . . . 192
GALBA. OTHO. VITELLIUS . . . 199
VESPASIAN 209
Remarkable Government of Vespasian. War of Judea, and taking of Jerusalem . ib.
TITUS 216
DOMITIAN 219
NERVA 223
TRAJAN 224
ADRIAN 229
ANTONINUS 235
MARCUS AURELIUS 237
COMMODUS 245
PERTINAX. JULIUS DIDIANUS . . . 248
SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS 252
CARACALLA and GETA. MACRINUS . 258
HELIOGABALUS 263
ALEXANDER SEVERUS 265
SUCCESSORS OF ALEXANDER SEVERUS TO THE ACCESSION OF AURELIAN . . . 271
AURELIAN 279
TACITUS. PROBUS. CARUS AND HIS SONS. DIOCLESIAN 283
DIOCLESIAN and MAXIMIAN. CONSTANTIUS CHLORUS, AND GALERIUS 288

ELEVENTH EPOCH.

THE SEAT OF THE EMPIRE TRANSFERRED TO CONSTANTINOPLE, AND CHRISTIANITY ESTABLISHED.

CONSTANTINE.

I. Beginning of the Reign of Constantine. His Conversion. The Defeat of Maxentius p. 298
II. Constantine Master of Rome. His first Laws 304
III. Maximin defeated by Licinius. Licinius dethroned by Constantine . . 312
IV. Affairs of the Church . . 316
V. Building of Constantinople. End of this Reign 322

CONSTANTIUS AND HIS TWO BROTHERS.

I. To the time when Julian was created Cæsar 330
II. From the Promotion of Julian till his Revolt 341
III. End of the Reign of Constantius . 347

JULIAN.

I. Government of Julian. His endeavours to destroy Christianity . . 354
II. Persian War. End of the Reign of Julian 364
JOVIAN 372
VALENTINIAN I. Emperor in the West, and VALENS in the East . . . 375
VALENS Emperor in the East. GRATIAN in the West 387

GRATIAN AND VALENTINIAN II. EMPERORS IN THE WEST, THEODOSIU SIN THE EAST.

I. From the Elevation of Theodosius to the Death of Gratian . . . . p. 395
II. From the Accommodation of Valentinian II. with Maximus to the Massacre of Thessalonica 400
III. End of the Reign of Theodosius . 409

LAST EPOCH.

THE BARBARIANS ESTABLISHED IN THE EMPIRE. ARCADIUS EMPEROR IN THE EAST. HONORIUS IN THE WEST.

I. To the time of the first Expedition of Alaric into Italy 416
II. Alaric in Italy. Gaul laid waste, and Spain conquered by the Vandals . 424
III. Alaric at Rome. End of the Reign of Arcadius 434
THEODOSIUS II. Emperor in the East. HONORIUS in the West . . . 442

THEODOSIUS II. EMPEROR IN THE EAST. VALENTINIAN III. IN THE WEST.

I. Valentinian associated in the Empire. Laws of Theodosius II. Genseric formidable in Africa 452
II. Conquests of the Huns under Attila. End of the Reign of Theodosius the Younger 459
VALENTINIAN III. Emperor in the West. MARCIAN in the East 464

SUCCESSORS OF VALENTINIAN III. AND MARCIAN TO ANASTASIUS.

I. To the Establishment of the Kingdom of Italy by Odoacer . . . p. 475
II. Odoacer destroys the Empire of the West. Is dethroned by Theodoric . 481
III. Theodoric the Great established in Italy 487
ANASTASIUS . . . 492

JUSTIN.

End of the Reign of Theodoric the Great . 500

JUSTINIAN.

I. Till Africa was reconquered from the Vandals . . . 506
II. Conquest of Africa by Belisarius . 511
III. First Expedition of Belisarius into Italy 517
IV. War with Persia. The Empire of the Goths reestablished in Italy by Totila . 524
V. Narses wrests Italy from the Goths. Affair of the Three Chapters . . 532
VI. End of the Reign of Justinian . 536
VII. Observations on the Life and Laws of Justinian . . . 541
SUCCESSORS OF JUSTINIAN, TO THE CONQUESTS OF THE SARACENS . . 547

TABLE OF ANCIENT GEOGRAPHY 563

ELEMENTS

OF

GENERAL HISTORY.

ROMAN HISTORY.

CONTINUED.

SEVENTH EPOCH.

THE SUBJUGATION OF CARTHAGE. OPPRESSION OF FOREIGN NATIONS BY THE ROMANS.

FROM THE YEAR OF ROME FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTY TO SIX HUNDRED AND TWENTY.

CHAPTER I.

WARS AGAINST PHILIP KING OF MACEDON, AND AGAINST ANTIOCHUS KING OF SYRIA.

Carthage humbled.

FIVE hundred Carthaginian ships delivered to Scipio, and burnt in sight of Carthage; the maritime force of this powerful state reduced to ten small galleys; her citizens taxed to pay a shameful tribute; the high-minded and spirited Hannibal, compelled to subscribe to the disgrace of his country, and the memory of former defeats entirely effaced by a series of victories; were the advantages gained by the second Punic war. Every thing concurred to swell the Roman pride by extending the empire of the republic; and the illustrious conqueror, who brought them a hundred and twenty thousand pounds weight of silver, was received at Rome with every expression of enthusiastic regard. His triumph was most magnificent, and the surname of Africa-

nus, which was given to him upon this occasion, was the most glorious of all rewards.

The ambition of Rome increases.

From this time the Romans gave free scope to their ambition. A thousand obstructions had hitherto confined them within the bounds of Italy; but, like a torrent which had burst its mound, they now rushed forth to overwhelm the surrounding nations. Former success inspired them with an eager desire after new victories. Every acquisition served to inflame them with a love of conquest; and the immense wealth which they acquired by reducing their enemies, supplied them with the means of succeeding in new wars. The most moderate people could scarcely have restrained the progress of their enterprises in similar circumstances; but what nation was ever less moderate than the Romans, when they hoped to add to the greatness of the republic?

552. War against Philip.

I shall pass over some expeditions against the Gauls and revolted Spaniards, that we may come to the war with Macedon. It was but a few years before, that Philip II. king of Macedon, had concluded a general peace, in which Rome caused her allies to be comprehended. Since that time this restless prince had assisted the Carthaginians, and disturbed the Greeks by new attempts. Attalus king of Pergamus, the Rhodians, and the Athenians, sent ambassadors to Rome to complain of Philip. As the people were desirous of it, war was immediately declared against him, and the decision did not remain long in suspense. Philip was defeated the first campaign by Sulpicius the consul. Quintius Flaminius, or Flamininus, the proconsul, gained a decisive victory over him

556. He is defeated.

near Cynocephale in Thessaly, where the inconvenience of the heavy Macedonian phalanx, in an uneven country, was very evidently demonstrated. This victory produced a peace, which cost the king a tribute of a thousand talents, besides being obliged to deliver up all his ships; and, for the faithful performance, his son Demetrius was given as hostage.

Liberty restored in appearance to the Greek cities.

At the celebration of the Isthmian games, a decree of the senate and Roman people was published by the proconsul, declaring, that the Greek cities, which had been under the dominion of the king of Macedon, were thereby restored to liberty. The whole assembly joined in acclamations. They admired, they extolled a warlike benevolent people, whose sole aim in all their exploits was to restore liberty to mankind. Stupid joy! Empty praise! We shall see presently whether the Greeks had reason to applaud themselves for having invited the Romans into their country. Greece was in a languishing state before she became acquainted with the Roman name; that fatal name which foreboded her approaching slavery.

The Romans accused of breach of faith.

The Etolians, an untractable people, who had greatly contributed to the late victory, already accused the Romans of a breach of faith, because they kept two towns of the country in their possession; but Nabis, tyrant of Sparta, very soon had greater reason to complain. During the war, Flaminius had been in treaty with him; but when that was at an end, he was no longer looked upon as an ally. The consul attacked him as a tyrant, with a design to compel him to resign Argos; and, having besieged him in Sparta, prescribed the terms of peace,

which left him in possession of his own territories, after the Argians were restored to freedom. Undoubtedly the Romans foresaw, that the states of Greece being rendered independent, free to govern themselves by their own laws, and divided into a number of small republics, would become an easier prey. They, therefore, affected to assist them in preserving their liberty; but this zeal for Grecian freedom was only a means for reducing them on the first favourable opportunity, which the Etolians saw through, and immediately solicited the assistance of a protector.

561. Antiochus declares against the Romans.

Antiochus the Great, king of Syria, the fifth in succession from Seleucus, was the enemy whom the Etolians stirred up to oppose the Romans. Hannibal, persecuted by the restless ambition of that republic, had taken shelter at his court; for while that hero was employed in reforming the abuses, and endeavouring to repair the misfortunes of his country, they insisted upon having him delivered up to them. Still more exasperated against his old enemies, if Antiochus had placed that confidence in him of which he was truly deserving, he might, perhaps, have amply revenged the ruin of Carthage. Hannibal advised that monarch to form an alliance with the king of Macedon, and to carry the war into Italy; but neither of these advices were attended to; and as every thing was conducted imprudently, of course nothing that was attempted could succeed.

The prudent policy of Rome.

The Romans, on the other hand, procured the most inexhaustible resources from their consummate policy. Their ambassadors were employed in Asia and in Greece to instil suspi-

cions of Hannibal, and to enter into an alliance with Eumenes, son of Attalus, king of Pergamus. They secured Philip and the Achean League, which was still gloriously supported by Philopœmen; they preserved the friendship of the Greeks, to whom the bare name of liberty was every thing. In a word, they took their measures with such prudence, that we need not be surprised at their speaking to the powerful monarch of Syria in the tone of superiority.

State of Syria.

This kingdom was still the greatest of all that had been dismembered from the vast empire of Alexander; but the Seleucidæ, in their solicitude to reduce Egypt, had neglected the most important cares of government, and, besides, by succeeding to the power, they adopted the effeminate manners of the Persians. The Romans were to them what the Macedonians had been to Darius. Almost all the revolutions which have happened in the world have originated from similar causes.

192. Misconduct of Antiochus.

The haughty Antiochus showed as great a love of pleasure at the breaking out of this war as the Etolians manifested military ardour. Being master of the isle of Eubœa, while he was at Chalcis, he very soon forgot the purpose of his expedition. Though fifty years of age, he fell distractedly in love with a young girl, whom he married, and, sunk in the bosom of pleasure, suffered military discipline to be totally neglected. He was suddenly informed, that Acilius the consul was advancing against him with the greatest speed, which made him hasten to take possession of the Pass at Thermopylæ, from whence he sent to desire succours

from the Etolians, as his troops were not yet arrived from Asia. The Romans arrived; and Cato, the lieutenant of the consul, who had borne that office himself, seized upon the summit of the defile by the same path which Xerxes and Brennus had formerly taken, poured down upon the enemy, put them in disorder, and the victory was completed by Acilius. Antiochus saved himself by flight, with about five hundred men, and Eubœa was retaken. The Etolians, after a vigorous defence, lost Heraclea, their capital. Lamia was taken from them by Philip; and, being besieged in Naupactus, they begged a truce, that they might make their submission to Rome, and it was granted; but their deputies refusing to submit to the will of the senate, which, however, was not explained to them, they were ordered to quit Rome that very day. Here we find the Romans most despotic tyrants.

568. Scipio, and his brother Africanus, put an end to the war.

L. Scipio, a new consul, set out to finish the war, attended by his brother Scipio Africanus. That great man had desired leave to serve under his brother. In their march through the dominions of the king of Macedon, they, in the name of the Roman people, remitted to him the remainder of the tribute he was to have paid. They restored his son Demetrius; and, in his humiliation, he was made sensible that his services were rewarded. Antiochus trembled for his fate in Asia; the more so, as the loss of a naval engagement foreboded new misfortunes; and, instead of bravely defending the coasts of the Hellespont, withdrew his army, by which means Asia was exposed to the Romans, who, being resolved to establish their

power in that country, rejected all proposals of accommodation. The king, therefore, unwillingly determined to hazard an engagement; and, with an army of eighty thousand men, and fifty-four elephants, against thirty thousand men, he was entirely defeated by the consul near Magnesia, and fled all the way to Antioch, from whence he sent to sue for a peace.

Hard terms imposed by the Romans.

Scipio Africanus, declaring the resolutions of the council to the ambassadors, said, 'That the Romans did not suffer themselves to be depressed by adversity, or elated by prosperity; that they were willing to grant the same terms after gaining a victory which they had demanded before the engagement; that Antiochus must evacuate all Asia to the west of Mount Taurus; pay the whole expense of the war, valued at fifteen thousand talents, and give twenty hostages,' &c.; and, besides, to remove all cause of distrust, he was to deliver up Hannibal, and Thoas the Etolian. These conditions were accepted; and Hannibal, wandering from asylum to asylum, the constant object of Roman persecution, at last died in the dominions of Prusias, king of Bithynia, the enemy of Eumenes.

How the Romans rewarded their allies.

The Rhodians, who had performed eminent services in the course of the war, sent deputies to Rome to procure the liberty of the Grecian cities in Asia. Eumenes, whose alliance had been equally useful, sent ambassadors to demand the spoils of Antiochus. This was a subject of such a delicate nature as to require the most mature deliberation. Policy required that the kings their allies should be indulged; but glory demanded that they should behave in the

same manner to the Greeks in Asia as to those in Europe. However, at last they found a means to satisfy both Eumenes and the Rhodians. They gave him Lycaonia, Phrygia, and Mysia. To the others they decreed Lycia, with a part of Caria and Pisidia, securing the freedom of those cities that enjoyed it before the defeat of Antiochus. There was something grand in making gifts of provinces; but it would have been much more noble to have secured the freedom of all Greece, as they affected to promise. Rome dazzled the whole world, but, in fact, only fought with a view of aggrandizing her own empire.

CHAPTER II.

CATO THE CENSOR. WAR AGAINST PERSIA. INJUSTICE AND AMBITION OF THE ROMANS.

The Romans began to be corrupted in Asia.

THIS war, which procured the name of Asiaticus to L. Scipio, yet proved fatal to the Romans, whose simple and austere manners were very soon corrupted by all the vices usually attendant on the possession of wealth. By acquiring a relish for the pleasures of Asia, a life of virtue was no longer agreeable, and in the bosom of prosperity the seeds of every evil sprung up. Must all nations, in this respect, resemble one another?

Severity of Cato the Censor.

Had it been possible to check the progress of this growing mischief, it might have been done by the famous Cato, a person of consular

dignity, a zealous friend to rural employments and frugality, and the declared enemy of every species of luxury; but whose economy was charged with being the effect of avarice, and whose character of inflexible severity and vehement temper, made him incapable of restraining himself within proper bounds.

His zeal for the Oppian law.

In the year 558, he, with excessive zeal, opposed the annulling of the Oppian law, which did not permit the Roman ladies to wear more than half an ounce of gold in their dress, and prohibited the use of chariots and clothes of different colours. This law was enacted at the time that Hannibal was laying waste the country of Italy, and threatening the destruction of Rome. When the war with Carthage was at an end, the motive for passing the law no longer existed, the women, therefore, used all their influence to have it annulled; and, notwithstanding the most furious railings of Cato, who was then consul, they carried their point. The passion for dress, which is natural to the sex, had not at that time degenerated into ruinous ostentation. The ladies, desirous of being distinguished from the common people, only laid claim to their ancient privileges, and the liberty of indulging in the use of their own property. Cato foresaw the consequences of luxury, and foretold the abuses and destructive excess to which they were hastening. But could not these have been prevented by some more gentle means; or could he expect that they would always continue to lead a life of poverty after they were become opulent?

566. Scipio Africanus accused unjustly.

It is not possible to find an excuse for his hatred against the two Scipios, nor for the manner

in which it was displayed. His first blow was levelled against Africanus, who, at his instigation, was accused by two of the tribunes before the people, of having, among other things, allowed himself to be bribed by Antiochus. The noble Africanus made his appearance on the day destined for trial; and, disdaining to offer any vindication of himself, tore in pieces the accounts. *On such a day as this*, said he, *I conquered Hannibal and Carthage. Follow me, O ye Romans, to the Capitol, and let us return thanks to the immortal gods.* He was followed by the whole assembly, and his accusers left in amazement. Having received another summons, this great man retired to his house in the country, where he died at forty-seven years of age. He possessed a degree of merit almost unknown to his country. To all the qualities of a great hero, he added a love of learning and the most agreeable manners; and ought to be regarded as the chief model by which the Romans formed themselves.

Causes Scipio Asiaticus to be unjustly condemned.

After his death, Cato prosecuted his brother Asiaticus with the same animosity, and let loose against him the same accusers. He caused the conqueror of Antiochus to be condemned to pay a heavy fine, for having received an immense sum of money from that prince, in order to obtain for him favourable terms of peace. But when his whole property was seized, there was not the least vestige of corruption to be found, nay, not enough to discharge the fine. At last his innocence was acknowledged, and an atonement made for the iniquitous sentence. Sempronius Gracchus, though a tribune of the people, boldly defended the two brothers. He

was rewarded by obtaining the famous Cornelia, the daughter of Scipio Africanus, in marriage. We shall see her children acting a very important part in the affairs of the republic.

In the office of censor goes beyond all bounds.

Cato gave vent to the bitterness of his own gall, and to the indulgence of personal enmity, under the mask of a rigid zeal, which flattered the passions of the people. Being raised to the office of censor, he discharged the duties like a merciless reformer, though his own private conduct was by no means unexceptionable. He degraded a senator, for having only saluted his wife in the presence of his daughters. Without assigning any reason, he excluded Scipio Africanus from the order of knights, into which he had entered after his disgrace, and reduced him to a level with the lowest citizen. He condemned all who wore any superfluous ornament. By these means he imposed upon the short-sighted populace, who are always pleased with that excessive severity of manners which is so suited to their own condition. They decreed a statue to him; and so great was his credit, that though he was tried no less than forty-four different times, he was always acquitted. Whatever was the merit of Cato the Censor, he was more indebted for his influence to popular prejudice than to his own desert. It is thus that the multitude are governed by enthusiasts.

Discovery of a debauched society.

Besides, such was the universal corruption of morals, that the severest remedies were become necessary. In 567, two years before Cato was chosen censor, the consuls discovered an abominable society, formed in different places, who, on pretence of celebrating the feasts of Bac-

chus, were guilty of the most shameful disorders. About seven thousand of both sexes were concerned, of whom numbers were put to death, and the rest either fled or killed themselves. However, the abolition of the *Bacchanalia* did not stem the torrent of vice.

The ambition of Rome disguised.

The Romans entered into new wars, in which their ambition was more and more displayed. The language of a decree in favour of the Statyellæ, a people of Liguria, is worthy of admiration. *Victory is glorious when it is satisfied with the reduction of an enemy, but becomes hateful when it proves oppressive to the miserable.* If this equitable maxim had been attended to by the Romans, they would not have been reproached with having seldom behaved to their enemies with moderation, except when their political views required it; or of having been ingenious in finding pretences for subjecting those nations to whom they declared themselves friends. Their history is nothing but a series of acts of injustice more or less disguised.

582. Commotions against the Romans in Macedonia.

A new storm threatened Macedonia. Philip, who hated the Romans to the last, without being able to wipe away the shame of the battles he had lost, had been a few years dead, after putting to death his son Demetrius, whom he had formerly sent as hostage to Rome, on a false accusation brought by his brother Perseus, who was afraid that the protection of the Romans, and the personal merit of Demetrius, would deprive him of the crown. Perseus having by this enormous villany succeeded to the throne of his father, most imprudently gave a loose to the hatred he had conceived against the Romans, and, making preparations himself, endeavoured

to prevail upon the Grecian states to join him; but the Romans being informed of his designs by Eumenes, immediately resolved upon a war. Upon this news, Perseus offered every kind of satisfaction the Romans chose to demand; but the senate told his ambassadors, that one of the consuls was ready to march into Macedonia; and if the king had any good intentions he might treat upon the spot, for they were resolved to listen to no proposals but with their arms in their hands.

565. The Romans defeated, but reduce the Macedonians

The consul Licinius very soon arrived, and the king, after gaining a victory, offered to conclude a peace upon the terms which had been granted to his father; but here the Roman steadiness appeared in the fairest light; for Licinius, though vanquished, boldly declared, that Perseus should not obtain peace but by yielding up his kingdom to the discretion of the Romans. An obstinate and inflexible firmness at length triumphed over every obstacle. That prince, who, besides his being cruel, avaricious, and timid, was incapable of gaining allies to support his interest, or of making himself formidable to his enemies, was totally defeated the fourth year of the war by Paulus Emilius. The Macedonian phalanx was routed, by attacking it on all sides with platoons, in proportion as it happened to be driven into disorder by its movements, which was the only means of breaking it. Perseus fled, and, being abandoned by his subjects, surrendered to the conqueror. He walked in a mourning habit before the triumphal car at Rome, where he died in captivity. The Macedonians were declared free; but the kingdom of Macedonia was added to the number of Roman provinces.

Prudence and virtue of Paulus Emilius.

This conquest ought to be ascribed equally to the valour and prudence of Paulus Emilius. Being advised by Scipio Nasica to engage the enemy sooner than was proper, alleging that the delay would be imputed to cowardice, *At your age I spoke as you do*, replied he; *but at mine, you will act as I do.* After having enriched the state, he continued to live in the greatest moderation; and Cicero could not add more to his praise, when he said, *that he carried nothing to his home but immortal honour.* Two of his sons were carried off by sudden deaths; and when he was afterwards haranguing the people, he declared, that he would cheerfully submit to this misfortune, provided the gods would deign to avert the evils with which the republic was threatened by such a flow of success; the sentiment of a truly wise man, who knows how fatal a poison is prosperity, not only to individuals, but likewise to societies and empires! In fact, Rome was ruined by her victories.

The Etolians reduced.

Greece was very soon made sensible of the weight of the Roman yoke. The fierce Etolians procured a peace upon the hardest terms. They were compelled always to serve under the generals of the republic, and never to assist her enemies or those of her allies, and to pay a tribute of five hundred talents in the space of six years. This was the punishment of their attempts. And it was with a jealous eye that Rome still saw the Achean League continue to preserve some remains of liberty.

The Achean League dissolved.

Philopœmen, who has been called the last of the Greeks, was lately dead; less moderate than his model Epaminondas, he had compelled the Spartans to join the Achean League,

after having abolished the laws of Lycurgus, and committed a number of outrages. Having been taken prisoner, and poisoned by the Messenian rebels, the Acheans had no leader to conduct them; and, in these circumstances, the Roman senate set themselves up as judges of a free people; dispersed such citizens as they chiefly suspected; and thus prepared for the total subjection of Greece, to whose misfortune the ruin of Perseus was a prelude, there being no barrier left against the ambition of these insatiable conquerors.

But the Roman character is discovered in nothing so much as in their behaviour to Syria. Popilius Læna, in the name of the senate, forbid Antiochus Epiphanes, the usurper, to attempt any conquest in Egypt; and, having drawn a circle round that monarch, *Before you stir out of this*, said he, *you must give an answer to the senate.* Antiochus replied, that he would obey. He sent ambassadors to Rome, who were haughtily told, *That their master was congratulated upon his having given a proof of his obedience.* After the death of that prince in 589, they excluded Demetrius, the lawful heir, from the crown, in favour of Antiochus Eupator, the son of Epiphanes, whose infancy left their ambitious views without restraint. They declared Eupator the ward of the republic, without even deigning to consult the Syrians, and sent three members of the senate to manage the government, in quality of guardians, with instructions to weaken the kingdom as much as possible. Rome now aimed at the conquest of the world, to which the destruction of Carthage paved the way.

Despotic behaviour of the Romans to Syria.

CHAPTER III.

THE THIRD PUNIC WAR. THE ROMANS DESTROY CARTHAGE, CORINTH, AND NUMANTIA.

The third Punic war.

THE old king Masinissa having for a considerable time been entirely devoted to the Romans, and secure of their protection, seized some lands which belonged to the territory of Carthage, and commissioners were sent from Rome to decide the dispute. Cato was one of the number, who, at his return, gave an alarming picture of the strength of the Carthaginians, declared that they were arming against the republic, and incessantly repeated that Carthage must be destroyed. Scipio Nasica, a man of more moderation and prudence, always contended against this sentiment, as being both violent and hazardous. But the king of Numidia having obliged the Carthaginians to arm for their own preservation, Nasica, whose mediation had put an end to the dispute, being insulted by the populace of Carthage, and the war being rekindled between Masinissa and that nation, it was impossible but that Rome would at last seize the opportunity to establish her dominion in Africa.

604. Rome declares war against the Carthaginians.

She sent ambassadors under a pretence of restoring peace, but, in fact, to watch favourable conjunctures for her own purposes. The Carthaginians were defeated by Masinissa in a great battle; and his son Gulassa massacred fifty-eight thousand men who had laid down their arms; upon which the ambassadors, throwing off the mask, declared war against the vanquish-

ed; a most detestable conduct, which was followed by transactions still more infamous.

Disarms them.

The terrified Carthaginians attempted to ward off the blow, by making the most humble submissions, and even offered to acknowledge themselves the subjects of Rome. The Roman senate promised to leave them their liberty, on condition that they should perform whatever was required of them by the consuls, and that they should send three hundred hostages. Upon this they gave a loose to the transports of joy, as if they had nothing to apprehend, and, in perfect confidence, sent the hostages, though a few of the most intelligent senators suspected some treachery. In the mean time, the consuls Marcius and Manilius arrived at the head of a powerful army, and, in a most splendid manner, received the deputies of Carthage, who came to know ther intentions, and to complain of such an hostile preparation. 'You are now under the protection of Rome,' said the consuls, and have no longer occasion for those arms with which your magazines are filled. Let them be brought to us as a proof of your sincerity.' They remonstrated in vain that Carthage was surrounded with enemies, and that arms were necessary for their protection. *Rome has undertaken to defend you, therefore obey.* This answer left them without any reply, and they submitted. Could they have suspected this most shameful treachery?

The Carthaginian courage revived by despair.

When the Carthaginians were stript of their arms and instruments of war, the consuls were not ashamed to declare that their city must be destroyed; but that they might settle elsewhere, though without any fortification, and at least ten miles distant from the sea. This thunder-

stroke, by driving them to despair, revived their courage. The people massacred those senators by whose advice their arms had been delivered, and they began to forge others with incredible ardour. Palaces and temples were converted into workshops; gold, silver, vases, and statues, supplied the want of brass and iron. The women sacrificed their ornaments, and even cut off their hair to make cordage. The Romans, persuaded that a city without arms could make no resistance, made an attack, and were repulsed; and their fleet was reduced to ashes by the Carthaginian fireships.

Scipio Emilianus saves the Roman army

Asdrubal, the Carthaginian general, would have cut the consular army in pieces if they had not been protected by Scipio Emilianus, the son of Paulus Emilius, and grandson by adoption of Scipio Africanus, of whose great merit he was a worthy rival. That hero, with three hundred horse, covered the retreat of the Roman legions, while they passed a river in sight of the victorious enemy. His behaviour and exploits even wrested an encomium from old Cato, who had never before commended any man; but, though he praised Scipio, his gall was discharged against the other officers. If Cato never praised any one before that time, can we look upon himself as being praiseworthy?

606. He carries on the war as consul.

This important war was to be decided by Scipio, who, though he was but thirty-seven years of age, and the Villian law, which had passed some time before, had decreed, that no person could be elected consul till forty-three years of age, yet he was not only chosen consul, but without drawing lots, as was the custom, had Africa assigned for his department. He very soon did credit to their choice, for Car-

thage was blocked up and reduced to famine. The Carthaginians offered to submit to any terms the Romans chose to prescribe, provided that their city might be preserved; but Scipio, not having it in his power to prefer humanity to revenge, was obliged to reject their offers.

607. He takes and destroys Carthage.

The Romans, by means of a false attack, got possession of one of the gates, and, entering the city, set fire to the houses, and put all who opposed them to the sword. The haughty Asdrubal basely stooped to beg his life; while his high-spirited wife, loading him with reproaches, stabbed her children, and threw herself headlong into the flames. The city was given up to be pillaged; and Scipio, who obeyed the cruel mandates of the senate with the utmost regret, destroyed it entirely by fire, which continued burning seventeen days. A splendid triumph, and the surname of Africanus, crowned the expedition of the proconsul, for the year of his consulship was expired. He was seconded in this war by his friend Lælius, the son of the friend of the first Scipio Africanus, and by Polybius the historian, a man worthy to record his heroic actions.

The Romans sanctified all the fury of war.

At sight of such a flourishing city given up to slaughter, and buried in flames, whatever censure the Carthaginians might have deserved, it is impossible to withhold a just indignation against the Romans. But what above all shocks human nature is, to see them sanctifying all the horrors of war by religious ceremonies. They solemnly devoted their enemies to the infernal gods, and Scipio performed the ceremony. The form which he pronounced is extraordinary. *O dreadful Pluto, let terror and vengeance loose a-*

gainst the Carthaginians! May the cities and people who have taken up arms against us be destroyed! To you, O ye furies, in my name, and in the name of the senate and Roman people, I devote all the enemies of the republic. To resist the tyranny of Rome was enough then to be made a victim to the infernal gods! Such imprecations might undoubtedly increase the military ardour and confidence of the soldiers, but how shocking must they be to a feeling heart!

Carthage must have sunk sooner or later.

Montesquieu has clearly explained the causes of the superiority which Rome had over Carthage. I shall only quote one or two of his reflexions 'The Carthaginians,' said he, 'who opposed their great wealth to the Roman poverty, even from that cause laboured under eminent disadvantages; for gold and silver may be exhausted, but virtue, constancy, strength, and poverty, never can. The ambition of the Romans sprung from pride, that of the Carthaginians from avarice. The one were desirous to command, the other to accumulate. The last, who were always calculating the profit and the expense, carried on war without loving it. Even the conquests of Hannibal changed the face of that war. Conquests are not difficult, because they are made with the whole force that can be exerted; but are not easily preserved, because they can be guarded only by a part of it.' We may add, that a military people must naturally conquer a nation of merchants.

Rome forms a design to reduce Greece.

This same year saw the destruction of Corinth and the liberty of Greece totally annihilated. The Romans, whose affected moderation degenerated into a sort of tyranny, when circum-

stances put it in their power to crush those whom they once caressed, reckoned it sound policy to keep up a division among those states; to protect traitors who were of use to them; to interpose their authority in all disputes, and gradually to assume the same power as if they had conquered Greece, instead of having declared it free.

The Achæans take up arms and are conquered.

The Achæans, whom they had respected while it was necessary, were disgusted with this conduct. The Romans, no longer in dread of Macedonia, were desirous to reduce them. Three adventurers, pretending to be sons of Perseus, had successively attempted the conquest of that kingdom, but were easily defeated. Metellus the prætor having nothing to apprehend from that quarter, turned his arms against the Achæans, who had been hurried to the precipice by two violent leaders, Critolaus and Dieus, and defeated them. Mummius the consul finished the war by storming and destroying Corinth, a city which had been built about nine hundred and fifty years, and was one of the most flourishing in Europe. Greece was reduced to a Roman province, under the name of Achaia.

The masterpieces of art were carried to Rome.

Rome enriched and decorated herself with new spoils. The masterpieces of art which were carried thither, added to the poisoned fruits of their Asiatic conquests, introduced taste, which was very soon followed by a total corruption of morals. Paterculus relates a remarkable instance of the ignorance of Mummius. That general told the people who were charged with the care of conveying the most valuable pictures and statues of Corinth to Rome, that if any piece was lost or spoiled, they should be

obliged to furnish one equally good at their own expense. The historian does not hesitate to prefer this rustic ignorance as more beneficial to the state, than the refinement of his own times. Mummius, who was as disinterested as he was brave, kept nothing for himself of all the wealth and rarities that were taken at Corinth. But if his manners, and the manners of his country had been polished by a taste for the fine arts, would Corinth have been given up to be destroyed by sword and fire? It is a great misfortune for states to become corrupted by luxury; but it is worse when they destroy themselves by barbarism. Happy is it for men when they can keep between the two extremes; to be virtuous with elegance, polished and enlightened without corruption.

613. Treachery of the Romans in Spain. Before the war with Carthage was ended, Viriathus, the general of the Lusitanians in Spain, a great commander, stirred up different nations to rebel against Rome. He was desirous of founding a kingdom by his conquests, and succeeded. Having it in his power to destroy the Roman army, he was satisfied with a treaty of peace, which secured to him the country he already possessed, leaving the rest of Spain to those iniquitous oppressors; but they revenged the defeats they had received by a piece of execrable treachery. Servilius Cæpio, the consul, procured orders to break the peace, suddenly attacked Viriathus, pursued him, and prevailed upon some traitors to murder him while he was asleep.

630. They violate two treaties made with Numantia. One crime brings on another. The Romans were guilty of the like treachery to Numantia, a considerable city in Spain, situated upon the

Douro. They broke two treaties which they had concluded with that city, and made themselves abhorred as enemies who had neither honour nor justice. The Numantines were resolved rather to perish than lose their liberty, and it was necessary to employ a man of abilities to subdue them. Scipio Emilianus was therefore chosen consul, though a recent law forbid the same man to be twice elected to that office. The destroyer of Carthage reduced Numantia to the last extremity; and declared that he would hearken to no proposals unless the inhabitants yielded up their city, their arms, and their persons. In all the horrors of despair and famine, and after having eaten the bodies of the dead, many of them chose to kill themselves rather than submit to the Romans. Numantia was destroyed; the rebellion was suppressed; but the Spaniards made new efforts to shake off the yoke. So many conquests, the produce of ambition, violence, profound and iniquitous policy, supplied food for those passions to which Rome soon fell a victim. By tearing herself in pieces, she was destined to avenge the cruel oppressions with which she had insulted the whole world. Before we pursue the thread of events, let us take notice of some particulars which will throw light upon history.

CHAPTER IV.

OBSERVATIONS UPON THE ARMY, THE MANNERS, THE FINANCES, AND LEARNING OF THE ROMANS.

The Roman soldiers.

MONTESQUIEU makes the following important remark. 'We observe, says he, that our armies at present are greatly diminished by excessive fatigue; yet by that very thing, those of Rome were preserved. I believe the reason is, that they were kept in constant exercise, while our soldiers pass incessantly from the severest toil to extreme idleness, which is of all things the most likely to destroy them. The Roman soldiers were accustomed to march twenty, sometimes twenty-four miles in five hours, carrying at the same time a weight of sixty pounds. They were kept in constant practice of running and jumping in armour; in their common exercise they carried swords, arrows, and javelins, double the weight of their ordinary arms; and these exercises were continual.'* Is it surprising that such soldiers under strict discipline, gained so many victories?

Had always soldiers when they wanted them.

Besides, the military resources of Rome were inexhaustible. Some time before the second Punic war, they raised seven hundred thousand foot, and seventy thousand horse against the Gauls. After their being defeated at Cannæ, they soon mustered numerous armies, for every man was a soldier. However, there were so

* Vegetius, l. 1.

many citizens destroyed by that war, that they were obliged to create a hundred and sixty-seven new senators, to make up the legal number.

Power of a republic.

Principles and sentiment conduced to render the Romans invincible. 'There is nothing so powerful, says the illustrious Montesquieu, as a republic where the laws are obeyed, not from fear or from reasoning, but from passion, as was the case at Rome and Sparta; for at that time, all the zeal which faction could inspire, was added to the prudence of an excellent government.' In fact, a sort of permanent enthusiasm gave life to all the enterprises and power of the republic.

Military rewards and punishments.

We have seen how useful military rewards and punishments have been from the earliest ages to support discipline and inspire courage; both of which were prudently distributed. Though they inflicted punishment, such as the bastinado, and even death, nothing had so powerful an effect as shame and disgrace. All kinds of rewards, variety of crowns, triumphs, ovations, the *spolia opima*, derived their value from the honours which accompanied them, till the love of money made riches to be preferred before honour; the natural consequence of extensive conquests, and the infallible sign of a speedy decay.

The Porcian law elevated the sentiments of the people.

During the second Punic war, the Porcian law forbade a Roman citizen to be scourged with rods. It was to be expected, that this softening the severity of the ancient laws, would inspire the people with sentiments still more noble. This law did not extend to the army, where the power of life and death was left in the hands of

the general; by which means military discipline was preserved in all its pristine vigour, while a milder legislation animated the people with a still greater love of their country. The Roman soldier, obedient, while he continued in the field, to the absolute commands of his general, retained those elevated sentiments which naturally flow from the enjoyment of liberty; but when he returned to his home, he was sensible only of the beneficent power of the laws.

Purity of morals adds to population.

Though it is taken notice of by very few writers, yet to population, which was the effect of sound morals and a sacred regard for marriage, Rome chiefly owed her prosperity. Not long after the first Punic war, the censors finding the number of citizens greatly diminished, exacted an oath from all that were not married, that they would enter into that state, and only with a view of raising subjects to the republic. However, that time furnished the earliest instance of a divorce, though permitted by their most ancient laws. Carvilius, who loved his wife, rupudiated her because of sterility. But in proportion as the manners of the people became more corrupted, divorces were more frequent. It was then that contracts of marriage were introduced, that women might have their fortunes secured in case of separation.

Numbers of vestals broke the vow.

It is very extraordinary, that though we find a number of vestals suffering for having violated their vows of virginity in every age, yet in the whole space of five hundred years, notwithstanding the indulgence of the laws, we hear not of a single instance of a divorce: which, on the one hand, must have been owing to the very dangerous temptations to which

the vestals were exposed; while, on the other, the conjugal union was confirmed by sound morals.

The people did not pay taxes after the reduction of Macedonia.

Till Paulus Emilius reduced Macedonia by the defeat of Perseus, and brought immense riches to the public treasury, a tax had always been paid by the people, which was settled by the censors in proportion to their fortunes; to which, in cases of necessity, extraordinary contributions were added. But from that time, till after the death of Cæsar, they were not subjected to pay any tax. Duties on merchandise, the produce of the lands of the republic, the imposts levied from the people of Italy and the provinces, composed the revenues of Rome. At the end of the first Punic war, Livius the censor laid the first duty upon salt, from which he had the name of *Salinator*.

Spanish mines, tribute from foreign nations.

Rome was chiefly enriched by the mines of Spain. In the time of Polybius, they kept forty thousand men constantly employed in the neighbourhood of Carthagena, from whence they daily received to the amount of two hundred and fifty Attic minæ, which is more than four talents. The plunder brought by their generals continually increased the public treasure, to which was likewise added the tribute paid by the most opulent nations in the world. Then the oppression and knavery of the public receivers, and the extortions of people in office begun. Then it was that the wealth of individuals introduced pomp and luxury into private houses, new and imaginary wants and disorders, which undermined the very foundation of the public weal. It was with great propriety that Scipio Africanus said, while two

consuls were canvassing for the department of Spain during the war with Viriathus in 609; *I think that both should be excluded; the one because he has nothing; and the other, because he never thinks he can have enough.*

Early ignorance of the Romans.

It was not till after the expedition into Asia against Antiochus, that the city was paved. Five hundred years had elapsed before they had any method of measuring time. Valerius, the consul, brought a sun-dial from Sicily; and it was not till more than a hundred years after, that Scipio Nasica introduced the *clepsydra*, by which the hours were measured in the night as well as the day. Every thing but the art of war was in an infant state. Their knowledge of physic consisted in family recipes, till Archagates, a Greek, came to exercise that employment and surgery, at the time when Hannibal laid siege to Saguntum.

First Poets.

Ennius their first poet, the friend of Scipio Africanus, composed the Roman history in verse, or rather in measured prose. His cotemporary Nevius, gave the history of the first Punic war in the same manner. These were the first feeble rays of genius, which was to furnish such excellent masterpieces to future ages. Here, as elsewhere, we find the study of poetry cultivated before prose, and dedicated to the commemoration of events. The ancient satire was in a state of barbarism. Fabius Pictor, consul of Rome in the year 485, had written upon the subject of the Roman history; but his work has not been handed down to us.

A taste for learning introduced.

It was from their connexion with Greece, that the Romans became enlightened, and their

taste and manners refined. Terence and Plautus extricated the Roman stage from barbarity. The last has more of the *comic power*, the satiric bitter salt of Aristophanes; but the other, who is still read with the greatest pleasure, transplanted the Attic elegance of Menander into his native country, where nothing but thorns had been produced, if we may use the expression, before the time of these two poets. It has been alleged, that Scipio Emilianus and Lælius joined him in the composition of his pieces; which is equally an encomium upon them, and upon Terence. These great men were accompanied upon their expeditions by Polybius the historian, and Panætius the philosopher. By this time, the love of the *belles-lettres*, philosophy, and the sciences, had cleared off that savage rust which the Romans had derived from their ancestors.

Cato rails against the rhetoricians and philosophers.

Cato, the censor, though himself an historian and orator, bitterly complained and railed against the Greeks, whom the young Romans attended for the sake of improvement. By a law which he passed, the rhetoricians and philosophers were expelled, whom he represented as dangerous persons, and who truly were so, when they only taught the art of puzzling reason by sophistry, and to give the appearance of truth to falsehood. Under such instructors, the Romans could acquire nothing but vice and error.

Learning nevertheless was useful.

But what had Cato to apprehend from true philosophers, and men of learning, who deserved that name? Must not Rome have gained by instruction? Did not her morals require to be more enlightened, and rendered more

agreeable to humanity? Had she not occasion for a knowledge of nature, to get rid of prejudices, to call in the aid of natural philosophy, astronomy, geometry, and all the sciences? Were not the charms of literature requisite to soften the severity of her character, and make her a model to the rest of the world, after having been so long an object of terror? Were not the two Scipios, the conquerors of Carthage, worthy of as high esteem as the ancient heroes, who were unacquainted with every thing but war and the plough? Would the Varros, Ciceros, Virgils, Horaces, and many others, have rendered their country more illustrious than the triumphs of all her generals, if the savage maxims of the censor had always continued to prevail?

Learning does not corrupt manners.

It is true, we shall see, that, at the very time when learning was in the highest esteem, Rome was overrun with every vice; but this corruption was the consequence of wealth and grandeur; while learning, far from being the occasion of the evil, might have furnished a remedy. Learning may be abused as well as religion, which is a great misfortune, because the object abused is in itself a great blessing.

Remarks upon Cato.

We still have a treatise on rural affairs, *De Re Rustica*, written by Cato, which is a valuable proof of the taste the ancient Romans had for agriculture. If the author had not had so great a dislike to the learning of the Greeks, it is probable that his book would have been still better. He frequently said that there were three things of which he repented; the having let a day slip without learning any thing; having trusted his wife with a secret; and having

gone by sea when he might have travelled by land. With such a passion for learning, how came he to be such a declared enemy to foreign sciences? He overstrained every thing; but true wisdom never overstrains any thing.

There is one thing very surprising to us, which yet was very common at Rome; to see the same man a magistrate, a warrior, a judge, and a general; an able pleader, a skilful politician, a statesman, and a man of letters, capable of signalizing himself, and being useful in all these employments. What wonderful men! Surely their education must have been very different from ours! How limited the circle in which our talents are confined!

A Roman signalised himself in every profession.

EIGHTH EPOCH.

THE GRACCHI. THE CORRUPTION OF THE REPUBLIC.

FROM THE YEAR OF ROME SIX HUNDRED AND TWENTY TO THE YEAR SIX HUNDRED AND SIXTY FIVE.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRIBUNESHIP OF TIBERIUS AND CAIUS GRACCHUS, AND OTHERS.

The foreign wars in which Rome had been engaged, had suspended the disputes between the senate and people, but their original cause still subsisted; and though the plebeians had gained some very eminent advantages, and both consuls were sometimes taken from their order, yet the situation of the lower people was not the less to be pitied. That equilibrium which should be preserved between the different ranks, was totally destroyed by the prodigious inequality of fortune; the riches of the higher orders increasing the poverty of the lower. The mischief increased in proportion as the passions were whetted by opulence. By subduing the world, Rome was arrived at that fatal point in which morals had lost all influence; every barrier was thrown down, and the very foundation of the republic undermined. Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, two men of singular merit,

attempted a reformation, which circumstances rendered impracticable. Their rash undertaking was a signal thrown out for a civil war, where the public liberty was drowned in Roman blood.

The two Gracchi and their mother Cornelia.

The illustrious Cornelia, daughter of Scipio Africanus, the mother of these two brothers, had given them the very best education. To the great qualities of the soul, they added all the improvements of a cultivated understanding, but more particularly the study of eloquence, so well calculated to govern the multitude. Tiberius, who was brother-in-law of Scipio Emilianus, and son-in-law of Appius Claudius, a person of consular dignity, had acquired the highest reputation, both civil and military, when the office of tribune of the people opened a way for his zeal or his ambition to enter that career in which he was afterwards to fall. According to some writers, his mother Cornelia inspired him with the design of opposing the nobles of Rome, by saying, *Why am I called the mother-in-law of Scipio, and not the mother of the Gracchi? Is not your name sufficiently illustrious? It depends upon you to make it so.* A love of glory undoubtedly might be excited by these expressions; but it is very much to be questioned, if an imprudent resolution could have been suggested to him by Cornelia. Seeing the whole country in possession of the wealthy, and inhabited only by their slaves; the excess of riches on the one hand, and wretched poverty on the other; a desire of restoring Rome to her ancient virtue; in one word, a spirit of patriotism probably led him to the attempt; and, perhaps, engaging

Project of Tiberius Gracchus against the nobility.

at first with all the warmth of a good citizen, he persisted in it with all the violence of the leader of a faction. Eager zeal, even for the cause of the public, should be attentively restrained, lest it degenerate into destructive passion.

The lands in possession of the wealthy.

For more than two hundred and fifty years, the Licinian law had been totally neglected and despised. So far from being satisfied with five hundred *jugera* of land, the patricians had usurped a considerable part of that belonging to the republic; and the wealthy extended their possessions beyond all reasonable bounds. These lands, which were formerly inhabited by the first nobles and most virtuous men of Rome, were now possessed only by slaves, employed to cultivate them for their masters, and exempted, nay, even excluded, from serving in the army; while nothing but indigence was the portion of the people who were destined to protect their country. Such heavy grievances seemed insufferable in a republican state; but the most attentive caution was needful to effect a reformation.

620. Tiberius proposes to revive the Licinian law.

Tiberius Gracchus proposed to restore the Licinian law to its former vigour; but with this proviso, that all which the wealthy possessed above five hundred *jugera*, should be paid for out of the public treasury. The patricians exclaimed against the proposal, and insisted upon the antiquity of their possession, and the inconveniences arising from the introduction of novelty. The greater the opposition, the more did the tribune endeavour to animate the people. *The wild beasts*, said he, *have their dens; but the citizens of Rome, who are*

called the masters of the world, have not a roof to hide their heads, nor a foot of land for a burying place.

Succeeds notwithstanding opposition.

The patricians, foreseeing the effects which such language would produce, had recourse to their usual policy, and gained over one of the tribunes, who, by his opposition, could stop the whole proceedings. Tiberius was greatly astonished to see Octavius, who had hitherto been his friend, employing his power of tribune to oppose him. After having, in vain, made every attempt to recover him to his party; after the most affectionate invitations; after the most animated controversy, but without the least ill nature on either side, he entreated the people either to depose him or Octavius. This bold proposal succeeded to his wishes; the Licinian law was revived, and he, his brother Caius, and his father-in-law Appius, were appointed commissioners to see it put in execution.

Disgusts the patricians by new attempts.

If Tiberius had rested here, he would have probably rendered his work complete; but he ruined himself by pushing the patricians to extremity. He not only added to this law, that the lands of the republic which had been usurped should be resumed; but, as there was not a sufficient fund to satisfy all the poor, he distributed among them the treasures of Eumenes, king of Pergamus, who had bequeathed his kingdom and riches to the Roman republic. And, lastly, to save himself from the resentment of his enemies, though contrary to rule, he required that he might be continued in the tribuneship, alleging that his life was in danger, and interesting the people in his preservation.

Violence of the senators.

Upon this the senators were resolved to use violent measures, and went up to the Capitol where the assembly was held. Tiberius, being warned of his danger, put his hand to his head, which was the signal agreed upon for his entreating the protection of his friends. His enemies supposed that he was asking a diadem, and that the people were going to bestow it, of which they informed the senate. Minucius Scevola, the consul, attempted in vain to quiet the minds of the people; but Scipio Nasica, a cousin-german of the tribune, cried out, *Since we are betrayed by the consul, let every good citizen follow me.* He run out, followed by a crowd of senators, who were joined by their clients, armed with clubs. Tiberius was knocked down and killed, with about three hundred of his friends; an example the more dreadful, as, till that time, no Roman blood had ever been spilt in any sedition. The senate, forgetting their former moderation, because they had lost their ancient manners, justified what was done, and, to protect Nasica from the vengeance of the people, sent him on an embassy into Asia, where he died.

Scipio Emilianus insulted retires from Rome.

So great was the aversion of the nobles against Tiberius Gracchus, that even Scipio Emilianus, his brother-in-law, approved of the murder, supposing that the tribune wanted to sow discord in the republic. Being insulted by the populace upon that account, *What would have become of you, ye wretched people,* cried he, *if it had not been for my father, Paulus Emilius, and me? You would be the slaves of your enemies. Is this the way you behave to your deliverers?* The people returned to a sense of

their duty; but the hero, with his friend Lælius, withdrew from Rome to enjoy his country seat at Cajeta in tranquillity.

He returns to oppose Carbo. His death.

However, he returned to oppose the seditious purpose of Carbo the tribune, who proposed a law for continuing the tribunes in office during the pleasure of the people, without a new election. This law was rejected; but as the disturbances continued about the partition of lands, Scipio was on the point of being named dictator in the year 624, when he was found dead in his bed. Metellus, who was the great rival of his glory, was sincerely afflicted for the loss, and said to his children, *Go and assist at the funeral of the greatest man Rome ever produced; you will never see his like again.*

629. Caius Gracchus chosen tribune.

In the mean time, Caius Gracchus, who was as virtuous, as zealous, and more eloquent than Tiberius, having for some years concealed his vast designs in retirement, at length entered into the road of honours. Notwithstanding the fears and dissuasions of Cornelia, he aimed at the tribuneship, and was chosen. The concourse of people in the Campus Martius for his election was prodigious: many of them, for want of room, climbed up on roofs of the houses, and gave their suffrages by their acclamations. They did justice to his great zeal, but did not foresee the fatal consequences.

His zeal for the people.

Never did tribune show more activity in the service of the people. To the division of the lands he added some new establishments, particularly public granaries, from whence the poor might purchase their monthly subsistence at a low rate. Being as much master of the people as he was detested by the nobles, he caused

himself to be continued tribune, without being intimidated by the fate of his brother.

Lessens the power of the senate.

That the power of the senate might be more and more weakened, he made it appear that very unjust decisions were frequently given from the tribunals, and that the judgment of all disputes between individuals ought to be transferred to the knights, who belonged to the order of plebeians; and he procured a law to be passed for that purpose. He likewise revived the statute which forbid any Roman citizen to be put to death without the consent of the senate and people. And, lastly, he undertook to procure the freedom of the city, and right of suffrage in the public assemblies, to all the allies of Rome in Italy.

Artful policy of the senate.

This scheme, which was too favourable to the popular faction, added greatly to the uneasiness of the senate, who set in motion the springs of a very deep policy to undermine Gracchus. They gained over Livius Drusus, a young tribune of uncommon abilities and irreproachable character. They suggested to him how he ought to act, to acquire an influence superior to that of his colleague, not by direct opposition, but by affecting a still greater zeal for promoting the interests of the people. Gracchus was charged with the care of a colony, which was sent to rebuild Carthage. The number of his party was greatly lessened by his absence, while that of Livius acquired new strength. At his return he found his colleagues were become his opponents, and prevented his being elected a third time to the tribuneship. His mortal enemy, Opimius, was chosen consul, and every thing seemed to indicate a bloody termination of the dispute.

The people were assembled to pass the new laws with which the nobility were disgusted, when one of the lictors of Opimius, passing near Gracchus's friends, insolently exclaimed, *Make way there, ye worthless people*, upon which he was instantly killed. The consul complained to the senate, and was authorized by them to do whatever *he thought most expedient for the good of the republic.* This set form vested him with the supreme authority, and he ordered the knights to take arms. Notwithstanding the tears and entreaties of an affectionate wife, Gracchus left his house without any guard, though the danger was manifest. *After the murder of Tiberius*, said she, *what confidence is to be placed either in the laws or in the gods?* An enemy to all violence, he had blamed the outrage committed upon the person of the lictor, a deed which was most unjustly imputed to him: on the contrary, his enemies were animated with a detestable desire of revenge, and the effects could not but be dreadful.

632. Opimius the consul makes the people take up arms.

Opimius, at the head of the troops, attacked Mount Aventin, to which the people had retired under the direction of Fulvius. He offered pardon to all who would lay down their arms, and engaged to pay for the heads of Fulvius and Gracchus their weight in gold. Being abandoned by the people, both of them fell; and above three thousand of their party were killed in this tumult. All their bodies were thrown into the Tiber, by order of this cruel consul, who had the impudence to erect a temple to Concord, after having deluged the city with blood.

Death of Caius. A cruel massacre.

The laws of the Gracchi annulled.

That the laws of the Gracchi might be annulled, it was enacted, that the rich should pay a perpetual standing rent, in proportion to the quantity of land they possessed, and the produce be divided among the poor. But these rents were very soon suppressed, and nothing remained to the people but their former wretchedness, increased by the haughty insolence of the nobles. Opimius being accused of the massacre committed upon so many Romans, gained his cause before the people by the eloquence of Papirius the consul. It was even determined, that the consul, with the authority of the senate, might free the republic from any dangerous citizens, without waiting for the opinion of the assembly of the people.

If the Gracchi aimed at tyranny.

The two Gracchi certainly were great men. Had they acted with more caution, and less warmth, they might have extricated the poor from oppression, or at least have procured them a milder lot; but if they became seditious, it was not so much their fault as the fault of the rich, who were void of compassion for the sufferings of the people. However, they never deserved to be reproached with having aimed at tyranny; and the senate, by imputing a crime to them, which was evidently opposite to their principles and conduct, sought only to destroy them, without thinking of the good of the republic. Pretences served them instead of justice in these dreadful executions, which taught them to be no longer sparing of Roman blood. The people erected statues to the two illustrious victims of the senate.

The death of Cornelia.

Cornelia had always looked upon her two sons as her only treasure, yet she bore their loss

with amazing constancy. It was imagined that old age or calamities had deprived her of her feelings; 'but they who were of that opinion,' says Plutarch, 'were ignorant, that a superior genius, joined to a liberal education, administers powerful remedies against affliction; and though fortune may sometimes oppress virtue, yet she cannot deprive it of that serenity and resolution which never forsakes it in the day of adversity.' Cornelia lived in retirement, and enjoyed the peaceful society of the learned, where she was honoured by all men of real merit, as a perfect pattern of virtue and politeness, or, in one word, the wonder of Rome. When showing her sons to a lady who was fond of dress, *These are my jewels*, said she. It was the expression of a noble mind, which made her duty her greatest delight.

Revolt of the slaves.

While Rome was distracted by these disturbances, the slaves in Sicily revolted, and gave the title of king to one of their number, whose name was Eunus. Three consuls carried on the war against them, which was ended with the taking of Enna, and followed by a most dreadful massacre. Some time after, the Romans settled colonies in *Transalpine* Gaul, where they founded Aix in Provence and Narbonne. They conquered the Allobroges and the people of Arvernum, Auvergnacs, against whom they employed both treachery and open hostilities. The Dalmatians were likewise reduced.

My plan forbids me to enter into these details. It is of greater consequence to observe, that the consul Scaurus, returning from Gaul in the year 638, employed soldiers to dig canals in the countries of Placentia and Parma, where

the overflowings of the Po, and other rivers, formed impassable marshes. Such salutary works are entitled to greater encomiums than the gaining of conquests. Let us likewise take notice of a singular instance of integrity highly worthy of imitation.

Noble action of the orator Crassus.

Papirius Carbo, who had been consul, and the great enemy of the Gracchi, was prosecuted by the orator Crassus, who was at that time a very young man. Papirius was betrayed by one of his slaves, who stole his strong-box, which was full of private papers, and put it into the hands of the prosecutor. Crassus, struck with horror at the treachery, did not open the box, from whence he could have had the clearest evidence, but sent it back to Papirius, with the slave in chains, saying, *I would rather see a guilty enemy escape, than destroy him by any unworthy means.* Papirius was, notwithstanding, convicted, and went into voluntary banishment, where he poisoned himself.

CHAPTER II.

THE WICKEDNESS OF JUGURTHA. HE CORRUPTS THE SENATE. WAR DECLARED AGAINST THAT PRINCE.

Corruption in the senate.

At Rome every thing was become venal, and the morals of the chief citizens were tainted by abominable corruption. The immense treasures which had been poured in upon them from all nations, had kindled a passion for the possession of riches, which extinguished every

sentiment of virtue and honour. We need only to read the account of the Jugurthine war, as given by Sallust, to see the senate in the most odious light, as a body of men who had sold themselves for every purpose of iniquity.

Jugurtha accused at Rome.

The old king Masinissa, that faithful ally of Rome, left three sons, who jointly governed the kingdom of Numidia, till, by the death of the two others, Micipsa remained sole master. Though he had two children, Adherbal and Hiempsal, he adopted Jugurtha, a natural son of one of his brothers, who had already distinguished himself by his valour, and whose ambition he hoped to restrain by gratitude; but he was scarce dead when Jugurtha begun to put his ambitious schemes in practice. Hiempsal was his first victim; and Adherbal, looking upon that murder as the prelude to his own destruction, raised an army for his protection; but, having lost a great part of his territories, he went to Rome to sue for justice.

He bribes the senators.

The murderer had been a long time certain, that the most enormous crimes might be palliated, in the eyes of the senators, by the power of money; and, accordingly, his liberalities spoke favourably for him in the senate, where the majority declared in his favour. They contented themselves with sending ten commissioners into Africa; and Jugurtha, by bribing Opimius, who was at their head, not only was declared innocent, but, in the division of the kingdom, procured whatever could be obtained from the partiality of avaricious judges, whose favour he had purchased.

Continues his criminal enterprises.

Being resolved to usurp the remainder, he very soon took up arms again, and pursuing Ad-

herbal, who fled for refuge to Cirtha, he invested that place. Rome seemed to be provoked; and new commissioners were sent. Scaurus, the chief of the senate, spoke the language of a Roman; threatened the usurper, and ordered him immediately to raise the siege; but still deceit and bribery prevailed. The deputies departed; and Adherbal, being deserted, was obliged to capitulate, and was assassinated by Jugurtha. That monster, stained with the blood of his brothers, arrogantly enjoyed their spoils.

642. Beginning of the Jugurthine war.

It was not possible longer to wink at such crying enormities; and the Roman people insisted upon taking cognizance of them. The senate, seeing the necessity of giving some proof of their justice and vigour, resolved to carry the war into Numidia. Calpurnius Piso, the consul, set out with Scaurus his lieutenant. They were both avaricious, and consequently inclined to betray their trust. Jugurtha made proposals to them; and, having obtained an interview, procured an advantageous peace, which, undoubtedly, cost him a considerable sum.

Jugurtha obtains impunity by bribery.

Whilst the senate remained in silence, Memmius, a tribune of the people, loudly exclaimed against the mercenary prevaricators, and determined that Jugurtha should be summoned to appear, that they might judge whether his submission was sincere or pretended. The Numidian, depending upon his treasures, and the contemptible meanness of his numerous partisans, arrived at Rome, and gained over one of the tribunes. He even caused one of his relations, who laid claim to his crown, to be assassinated, and yet came off unpunished. At leav-

ing Rome, he exclaimed, *O venal city, thou wouldst soon be destroyed, if thou couldst find any one to purchase thee!*

Scaurus condemned his own accomplices.

To complete the infamy, Scaurus, at the head of a commission appointed to prosecute the traitors who had been corrupted by Jugurtha, banished his own accomplice, Calpurnius, and some other senators, and even a pontiff, though, till this instance, no pontiff had ever been exiled. The most criminal sometimes affect the greatest severity, as if they could hope to escape the public censure by punishing others.

Metellus continues the war.

The war having been renewed under the command of Aulus Posthumius, a cowardly indiscreet general, he was obliged by Jugurtha to pass under the yoke. But Metellus, the consul, wiped out this stain which was thrown upon his country. After having fruitlessly attempted, by seduction, to get Jugurtha into his possession, either dead or alive, (for the principles of honour, which should regulate all proceedings, even with respect to a perfidious enemy, were totally relaxed,) he was so successful in carrying on the war, that the king was at last obliged to submit. Besides two hundred thousand pounds weight of silver, he was compelled to deliver up all his elephants, and a part of his horses and arms. After this, being ordered to make his appearance before Metellus, distrust revived his drooping courage. Though he had been already stript of his resources, he resolved to continue the war, choosing rather, as he said, to die in the field, than to present to the yoke a head ornamented with a diadem.

Marius a dangerous man.

Metellus had chosen for his lieutenant the famous Marius, a plebeian of obscure birth, without learning or education, but devoured by ambition, who had been hardened to toil from his infancy, sober, bold, and indefatigable. At the siege of Numantia, this warrior had attracted the attention of Scipio Africanus. From being a private soldier, he had been promoted to the command of a cohort, elected tribune of the people, and at last prætor, after having twice canvassed for the edileship without success. He was one of those impetuous characters which nothing can divert from their purpose, equally capable of doing the greatest good or the greatest mischief, according as conjunctures are favourable, or interest guides.

He is appointed to the command.

Marius, aiming at the consulship, and to make himself appear to advantage, was not ashamed to censure Metellus, his general and benefactor. He accused him of a timid tardiness, and boasted that he could finish the war with half the troops in a single campaign. He procured leave to go to Rome to canvass for the highest office of the republic; and, when there, redoubled his invectives, both against the illustrious Metellus, and the whole body of the nobility. In a word, he so gained the people, that he was chosen consul, and appointed to prosecute the Jugurthine war, though the senate had assigned that province to Metellus, for the third time, in quality of proconsul. Thus did ambition triumph.

He inveighs against the nobles.

Marius being become more bold than ever in his speeches to the people, before his departure gave free vent to his gall against the nobibility, treating them with the utmost contempt,

and extolling himself with insolent haughtiness. The speech put into his mouth by Sallust, is a picture of his character and sentiments. There may be easily traced, the firm uncultivated sentiments of a soldier, who places all merit in military accomplishments. However, his extravagant declamations contain very useful maxims, well calculated to make every man, who is proud of his birth, blush at having disgraced it by unworthy actions.

Metellus recalled, but honoured at Rome.

Such censure could never be applied to Metellus. He was prudent, and he was a conqueror. He hoped to bring the war to a speedy conclusion, when he had the mortification to see the command snatched out of his hands by an ungrateful wretch whom he himself had raised. At his return to Rome he found no difficulty in dispelling any unjust suspicions that might have been conceived against him; and a triumph was decreed to him by the people, with the surname of Numidicus. Having been accused by one of the tribunes of pillaging the province, the Roman knights refused to examine the accounts, which he produced for his vindication. *The strongest proof of his innocence*, said they, *is the testimony of his whole life*. An accusation so concluded was equal to a triumph.

Jugurtha delivered up by treachery.

Notwithstanding the military skill and courage of Marius, the Jugurthine war was not finished but by treachery. Sylla, his quæstor, who very soon became his rival, seduced Bocchus, king of Mauritania, and father-in-law of Jugurtha, from his alliance with the king, and then persuaded him to deliver up that prince in the most infamous manner to the Ro-

mans. After having wavered for some time between the calls of nature and the temptations of interest, Bocchus arrested his father-in-law, who, on the security of the word of honour of his son, came to hold a conference, at which he was made to expect that Sylla should be put in his power. The king of Numidia was led to Rome, loaded with chains, to grace the triumph of Marius, where he endured the humiliating insults of the soldiery, and perished in a dungeon, the victim of his own wickedness, and of the revenge of a corrupted republic, become contemptible even in the bosom of victory.

Rome enriched by this war.

The plunder of his kingdom amounted to three thousand seven hundred pounds weight of gold, and near six thousand pounds of silver, besides coined money. War, which has been so ruinous to modern nations, always enriched the Romans. Should we then be surprised, when we see that their ambition commonly concluded one war only to begin another? But we are now approaching to the period, in which the spoils of the world, were only to serve as food for civil war; when the desire of tearing it from one another, made the people become the greatest enemies of the republic; and when Rome at last, was to be punished by the wickedness of her own children, for the many acts of injustice she did to mankind.

CHAPTER III.

INVASION OF THE CIMBRI AND TEUTONES. DREADFUL CORRUPTION OF THE REPUBLIC. THE SOCIAL WAR.

Invasion of the Cimbri and Teutones.

THESE insatiable conquerors were very soon in danger of losing the fruit of all their victories, by a dreadful deluge of barbarians. The Cimbri and Teutones, issuing from the north of Europe, and the neighbourhood of the Baltic, entered the country of the Norici, at present Bavaria and Tirol, and afterwards into Gaul, where they were joined by some of the people of the Gaulish districts. They defeated five consuls, with a dreadful slaughter. In the year 648, Rome lost fourscore thousand men in a single engagement.

Marius chosen consul several years successively.

Marius alone seemed to be capable of recovering these losses. The laws did not allow an absent person to be chosen consul, and made it necessary that ten years should elapse before any one could be reelected. However, they waved the common form. Marius was appointed consul for the second time, before he returned from Africa, and chosen for four years successively, till the barbarians were totally defeated. A very dangerous precedent in a republican government.

His capacity and prudence in this war.

His capacity and courage were equally displayed in Gaul, where the war first began. His army was subjected to the most rigid disci-

pline. His nephew, a legionary tribune, of a very debauched character, having been killed by a soldier, whom he had insulted, the homicide, so far from being punished, was rewarded. Marius, who was politician enough to profit by the superstition of his country, with great parade led about a pretended prophetess, to whom he dictated oracles, and who seemed to impress the stamp of divinity upon all his projects. Having been challenged to single combat by one of the chiefs of the enemy; *If he is desirous to die*, said the consul coldly, *let him hang himself.*

651. He defeated the Teutones and Cimbri.

The Teutones, though separated from the Cimbri, were formidable by their number and bravery. Despising their insults, and accustoming his troops not to be dismayed at their appearance or their cries, Marius did not choose to hazard an engagement, till he thought he was secure of a victory; but he at last cut them entirely to pieces at Aix in Provence, where, it is said, they lost above an hundred thousand men. The following year, being the fifth of his consulship, he likewise defeated the Cimbri at Vercellæ, while they were laying waste the country of Italy. Plutarch tells us, that the greatest part of the barbarians, both men and women, hanged themselves in despair, rather than survive their defeat; and, when they could find no more trees, they tied themselves by the neck to the tails of their horses, or the horns of their bullocks. Perhaps, they would have subdued the Romans, if they had been as well disciplined; but they knew only how to fight like madmen, and die with courage. Catulus, the proconsul, who, with Sylla,

commanded a part of the army, had a greater share in gaining the victory than Marius, and partook with him in the honour of the triumph. Nevertheless, Catulus is almost entirely forgotten, so much does reputation sometimes depend upon the caprice of fortune.

Marius unites with the tribune Saturninus.

Marius, in saving the republic, sought only to gratify his ambition. Having an insatiable desire for honours, and sacrificing every thing to his love of power, by bribery and cringing, he procured the consulship for the sixth time; and though the great Metellus was upon the list, he found means to cause a man of no merit to be appointed his colleague. He formed the strictest union with Saturninus, a tribune of the people, and Glaucia, the prætor, two men who were equally enemies to virtue and the public weal.

Law of that tribune against the senate.

Saturninus proposed an Agrarian law with the following clause: 'That the senate should oblige themselves by oath, to confirm whatever was enacted by the people, with this penalty, that every senator who refused to take it, should be degraded, and pay a fine of twenty talents.' The crafty consul, who at first affected opposition, afterwards declared in favour of it, with an equivocal restriction, which drew the senators into the snare. Metellus, whom he wanted to destroy, persisting singly to refuse it, was banished. *Either things must change*, said he, on leaving Rome, *and the people, seeing their error, will recall me; or they will not change, and then I must congratulate myself on being absent from my country.* They did change, and even from the violence of Saturninus, who pushed matters to such extremity, that he was forsaken by Marius.

653. Saturninus punished for his violence. That tribune being anxious to have Glaucia chosen consul, caused his competitor Memmius to be publicly assassinated; upon which the senate, as was the custom in cases of great danger, ordered the consuls to provide for the safety of the republic. They armed against the rioters, and pursued Saturninus into the Capitol, where he and Glaucia were both massacred, notwithstanding the desire which Marius had to save them. Marius very soon had the mortification to see Metellus recalled, who, in the bosom of virtue and philosophy, consoled himself for the oppressions he had suffered; and whose banishment, according to a Roman historian, * did him more honour than all his dignities, and all his triumphs. Before his arrival, Marius, upon some vain pretence, went into Asia, that he might not witness the glory of a rival who had been oppressed by his ambition.

Universal degeneracy of the republic. The republic, having attained the highest point of greatness, tottered on the brink of the precipice. That generous patriotism, which made individuals sacrifice their own interest to the good of the state, was almost totally forgotten. The citizens of the greatest merit became the victims of the worthless. Rutilius being basely accused, because of his having reproved the public receivers for being guilty of extortion, went into a voluntary exile, rather than stoop to offer a defence. Upon one of his acquaintance saying to him, that a civil war would very soon make it an easy matter to have him recalled, he replied, *What harm*

* Velleius Paterculus.

have I done to you, that you should wish me such an unhappy restoration? May my country rather blush at my being in banishment, than afflicted at my return!

To enrich themselves, the tax-gatherers may be said to have wasted the provinces. Being knights, and the courts of justice in the possession of their order, they were not apprehensive of inquiries being made into their conduct, or the severity of justice. Besides, did not the produce of their rapacious plunderings procure them importance with their riches, and, in some degree, a title to impunity? Oppressions of the receivers.

The greatest officers in the state gave into a parade of opulence and the caprices of luxury, which give room to suppose, or always bring after them, a depravation of manners. Luxury of the great.

Crassus the orator, though he was censor, distinguished himself by a magnificence which would have been punished in former times as a shameful irregularity. According to Macrobius, he was so fond of a tame lamprey, that after the death of the fish he wore mourning, and had a monument erected to its memory. A senator, who was tribune of the people, for the patricians came to be desirous of that office, caused the law to be annulled which limited the expenses of the table, representing it as *the rust of harsh uncivilized antiquity*. In a word, the passions were daily inflamed by new vices, and one spark was sufficient to kindle a civil war, to which that of the allies served as a prelude. Whim of Crassus the orator.

The Italian states, allies of Rome, had for a long time hoped to be admitted to the privileges of Roman citizens. Caius Gracchus, to 662. Laws of Drusus, occasion the Social war.

strengthen his party, had endeavoured to procure this important advantage to the Latins, and lost his life in the attempt. Drusus, the tribune, a man of eminent abilities, and distinguished by his birth, formed a chimerical scheme to gratify the allies, and all the different orders of the state. Seeking to redress great evils, he occasioned still greater, which is a common consequence when vice prevails. He proposed Agrarian laws, the settling of new colonies, and the distribution of corn for the relief of the poor: he likewise proposed that the administration of justice should be shared between the senators and the knights, as the knights had publicly abused that power; and that any magistrate who should prevaricate in the execution of that office, should be brought to a trial. It was said, though upon what authority is not known, that he intended to indemnify the knights, by causing three hundred of them to be admitted into the senate. As the allies had very considerable influence by means of their friends and relations, Drusus won them over to his interest, by promising them the privileges of citizens. So well did he know how to manage the tempers of the people, that, notwithstanding the warmest opposition, his laws were passed.

Drusus assassinated.

Beside the inconvenience arising from the number of citizens being multiplied without end, there was one great obstacle to the pretensions of the allies. The Romans could not consent to make these people their equals, whom they had always looked upon as their subjects; and, in this respect, Drusus felt the weakness of his influence. The allies, having

lost all hope of seeing his promise made good, some of them entered into a resolution to assassinate the consuls. The tribune being informed of the conspiracy, had the generosity to acquaint Philippus the consul, who was his greatest enemy. As a reward of his service, he was himself assassinated very soon after. An anecdote has been related of him, which will serve to give us an idea of his virtue. The architect offering to construct a new house which he was building, in such a manner as to prevent his being overlooked; *Rather employ your art*, said he, *that my actions may be exposed to the view of the whole world.* How do such worthy citizens make vice hang down her head, even during a period of universal corruption!

Revolt of the allies. The Social war.

The death of Drusus served as a signal for the war of the allies, who had concerted to revolt. They took up arms, and were the more formidable as they were accustomed to the military knowledge and discipline of the Romans; and without them Rome had never conquered. The Samnites and Marsi were at their head. They formed a plan of a new republic upon the model of that whose yoke they wanted to shake off, and appointed consuls, prætors, and other magistrates for themselves. They fought against the best Roman generals, Marius, Sylla, and Pompey; and, after the first campaign, sent to Rome to demand justice, and to claim a share of those advantages which they had contributed to procure. The senate replied with their usual steadiness, that their demands might be attended to, if they laid down their arms and acknowledged their fault; but if

they did not comply, let them take care how they sent any more ambassadors. From that time they fought with still greater inveteracy, and with various success, till Roman policy found it necessary to employ artifice as well as resolution. After having enrolled her freedmen, contrary to custom, Rome artfully granted the privileges of the city to those of the allies who had continued in their duty, and also to such of the rest as made proper submission; so that the Social war relaxed all at once. Each people withdrawing from the league, in order to obtain the object of their pretensions by a separate treaty, the Samnites and the Lucanians alone obstinately persisted in the war.

664. Eight new tribes formed of the allies.

The senate very soon discovered a means of rendering that which had been obtained with so much difficulty, of very little use to the allies. Instead of distributing them among the thirty-five tribes, where, from their number, they would have had a majority of votes, they composed eight new tribes, who, as they were to give their voices last, could have no sort of influence. However, they consented to this, either from their not seeing what would be the consequence of such an arrangement, or that they were sufficiently gratified by being admitted as citizens.

The knights deprived of the administration of justice.

After the death of Drusus, all his laws were annulled; but Plautius the tribune succeeded better in stripping the knights of their jurisdiction. He caused a law to be passed to make each tribe name fifteen of their number to try civil causes; but the audaciousness of the wicked could no longer be restrained. Asellio, the

prætor, who protected the poor against the usury and insults of their creditors, was assassinated at the very time he was offering up a sacrifice, without the senate being able to discover the authors of such an atrocious and glaring crime.

Human victims forbidden.

The practice of sacrificing human victims had taken place on particular occasions, but they had been lately forbidden. It was an homage paid to humanity: but we shall soon see both citizens and the republic sacrificed to gratify frantic passions.

NINTH EPOCH.

THE CIVIL WARS. RUIN OF THE REPUBLIC.

FROM THE YEAR OF ROME SIX HUNDRED AND SIXTY FIVE TO SEVEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY FOUR.

CHAPTER I.

MARIUS AND SYLLA BEGIN THE CIVIL WAR.

The Social war led to the civil wars.

THE Social war being ended, it was but making one step farther to involve the republic in all the horrors of a civil war. It was no longer new to see the blood flowing, which nature and the laws should have rendered precious, and the violence of the different factions had made acts of oppression perfectly familiar. When an ambitious man is desirous of carrying his point by force of arms, it is an easy matter to find ministers for his outrageous purposes, of which Marius and Sylla set a dreadful example. We have already made the reader sufficiently acquainted with Marius; but the other deserves to be better known.

Sylla rises to the first offices of the state.

He was of the illustrious family of the Cornelii, and descended from Cornelius Rufinus, who had been expelled the senate by the censors in the year of Rome 477, because he had

silver plate in his possession to the amount of more than a hundred and five ounces, and from that time not one of that branch of the family had attained the rank of consul. Sylla being possessed of the happiest genius, improved by learning and politeness, excited by ambition and a love of glory, with courage, activity, and excessive pliancy of disposition, was perfectly qualified for raising the honour of his family. Though fond of pleasures, he knew how to sacrifice them to his fortune and reputation; and, though born to very little, he amassed great riches, which, undoubtedly, made him deserve the censure once thrown out against him. *How is it possible that you can be an honest man, who are at present so rich, though your father did not leave you any thing?* After the Jugurthine war, he obtained the office of prætor by means of his money and intrigues. Perhaps he owed a considerable part of his popularity to his entertaining the people with a combat of a hundred lions against men, a most dreadful spectacle! but perfectly agreeable to the taste of the Romans; and this, together with his distinguished actions during the Social war, wherein he outshone Marius, greatly increased their attachment to his person. He was chosen consul, and was sent to carry on the war against Mithridates, king of Pontus, whom I shall soon have occasion to mention.

Marius could never forgive Sylla for having ascribed the success of the expedition against Numidia to himself; and, though old, unwieldy, and infirm, wished to have the command in this new war. To carry it from his rival, he joined with Sulpicius, tribune of the people, an

665. Marius wrests from him the command of the war against Mithridates.

an insolent unruly man, always escorted by satellites, whom he impudently called his *anti-senate*. After a tumult, in which the lives of both consuls were in danger, a law was passed by the tribune, importing, that the allies, who were newly admitted into the freedom of the city, should be incorporated with the ancient tribes, instead of forming eight new tribes, as had been determined by the late conventions. By this means, having secured a majority of votes, he proposed to appoint Marius, who was then out of office, to be general of the army against Mithridates, and easily carried his point.

Sylla enters Rome sword in hand.

Sylla was at his camp when he received information of this affront, and, resolving to be revenged, led his army, upon which he knew he could depend, towards Rome, where a number of his party had been already massacred. He entered sword in hand, and threatened to set fire to the city, if he met with the least opposition. Marius and Sulpicius being fled, he restrained the soldiers, and prevented them from committing any outrage. He annulled the laws of Sulpicius, and reestablished the authority of the senate, by restoring the ancient rule, which forbid any law to be proposed until it had their sanction. He enacted, that the people should from thenceforth give their votes by centuries, and not by tribes, and they, being intimidated, confirmed all these changes. The republic was in such a wavering state, that whoever was strongest dictated whatever laws he pleased. When principles are annihilated, force must govern.

Decree of proscription.

The consul, to gratify his revenge, proposed to the senate, to have Marius and his son, Sul-

picius, and nine of their adherents, declared enemies of their country. This was opposed with great spirit by Q. Scævola, a learned and truly worthy citizen. 'Neither your threatenings, nor your soldiers,' said he, 'shall make me disgrace my old age, by declaring that man the enemy of Rome, who has preserved both Rome and Italy.' But the other senators were more pliant, and passed a decree of proscription. The head of Sulpicius being brought to Rome became an object of terror. Marius was taken in the marshes of Minturnæ, where he had concealed himself. A soldier, who was to have been his executioner, awed by the sight of that great general, durst not strike the blow; and the people of Minturnæ assisted him to make his escape into Africa. The governor of that province having sent him orders to depart, Marius boldly replied to the officer who delivered the message, *Go and tell him, that thou hast seen Marius, a fugitive, amidst the ruins of Carthage.* A striking picture of the vicissitudes of fortune! He then retired with his son to an island, in expectation of some favourable revolution.

666. Cinna chosen consul.

Every thing very soon changed its appearance in Rome. Cinna, a violent partisan of Marius, was chosen consul; to which Sylla agreed, after having made him swear that he would not oppose his interest. He even affected to rejoice at seeing the people make use of that liberty to which he pretended he had restored them; but this moderation was not sufficient to disarm his opponents of the hatred they had conceived against him. The new consul, though his relation, caused him immediately to be accused by a tribune, and by this means obliged him to set

out for the army that was engaged in carrying on the war against Mithridates. For all prosecutions against a citizen immediately ceased when he was employed in the service of the republic; and, upon his departure, Cinna acted without any reserve. He restored the law made by Sulpicius regarding the privileges of the allies; but, being opposed by his colleague Octavius, they came to blows, and the forum flowed with blood. The enemy of Sylla was driven out of Rome, deprived of the consulship, and Merula, priest of Jupiter, chosen his successor.

Marius and Cinna besiege Rome, and massacre their enemies.

Marius, finding this a favourable opportunity, returned and joined Cinna, who declared him proconsul, when both, at the head of a considerable army, laid siege to the city. Their presumption was greatly increased by the senate submitting to send them deputies. Cinna refused to hearken to them till he was acknowledged to be the rightful consul, and promised, upon his being recognised after the voluntary demission of Merula, that he would spare the lives of the people; but, nevertheless, Marius and he, with the other leaders, entered into a resolution to put all those to death whom they looked upon as enemies, and, accordingly, that dreadful massacre was perpetrated.

Idea of the miseries of Rome.

Let us figure to ourselves a city stormed by savages; the heads of the most illustrious citizens exposed to public view upon the rostra; the possession of wealth and power a sufficient cause for being proscribed; a thirst of blood increased even by carnage; the furious Marius, who had affected to feel the depression of a man under misfortunes, though above seventy years of age, surpassing Cinna in acts of cruel-

ty, and we shall have formed an idea of the dreadful spectacle which was then exhibited in Rome.

I shall mention a single anecdote, which may serve to mark the character of civil wars. Two brothers happened to encounter in an engagement, wherein the one killed the other without knowing him; and, while stripping him of his armour, discovered who he was, when, in a transport of despair, he immediately killed himself upon the funeral pile of his brother, that their ashes by that means might be mingled. One brother kills another.

At the close of this year of barbarity, Marius and Cinna seized upon the consulship, without condescending to wait the form of election. The first of them died very soon after. Being greatly disturbed by the apprehensions which were the natural consequence of his guilt, he dreaded the return of the victorious Sylla, whose vengeance, he concluded, must be terrible. Having no resources from the exercise of reason, he endeavoured, by immoderate drinking, to lull his senses asleep, and thus met the death he deserved. If that monster of cruelty and wickedness saved Rome, it was only to destroy it on a future occasion. Learning, which he so much affected to despise, would at least have informed him, that he only tormented himself in a vain pursuit of happiness; that being elected seven times to the consulship was an ineffectual remedy for the distractions of a mind immersed in guilt; and that iniquitous power employed in exercises of cruelty, must prove an equal scourge to the oppressor and the oppressed. His example will never be quoted by the enemies of Death of Marius.

learning. No better evidence need be adduced to refute their invectives.

Barbarity of Fimbria to Scævola the pontiff.

Valerius Maximus tells us, that the day on which Marius was buried, Fimbria, one of his most violent partisans, caused the celebrated pontiff Scævola to be assassinated; and, as the wound did not prove mortal, summoned him to be tried. Some person asking Fimbria, *Of what he proposed to accuse this valuable man? Of not having received the wound of the dagger deep enough in his body*, said he, *by which he ought to have been killed.* This story seems absurd; but such men were much worse than wild beasts.

CHAPTER II.

THE EXPEDITIONS OF SYLLA INTO GREECE AND ASIA. MITHRIDATES A FORMIDABLE ENEMY TO ROME.

Mithridates a formidable enemy to Rome.

IT is now time to follow Sylla in his expeditions, and to be made acquainted with the famous enemy against whom he was employed. We have already seen the Roman republic establish her despotic sway in Asia, commanding kings, protecting some to subdue others, and setting herself up as an universal umpire, that she might decide in such manner as was best calculated to serve her own purposes. When Mithridates, king of Pontus, came to be of age sufficient to engage in military enterprises, he was resolved to oppose this ambitious power. His illustrious birth, the elevation of his sentiments, the great powers of his genius, his cou-

rage confirmed by being inured to fatigue, his advantageous situation, his harbours upon the Euxine sea, altogether contributed to make him capable of succeeding in the most difficult undertakings; and his ambition was boundless.

His conquests.

This prince had wrested Cappadocia from Ariobarzanes, and Bithynia from Nicomedes, both of them kings in alliance with Rome, and conquered all Asia Minor. Rome having declared war against him, he caused fourscore thousand Romans or Italians to be massacred in one day, as if he had been resolved to kindle an irreconcilable hatred between the two nations. Such a dreadful carnage, which was extended with the same rage through all the provinces, proves how much the Roman yoke was detested in Asia.

The generals of Mithridates at last took possession of Greece; and the Athenians were foolishly elated at this change of masters. Aristion, an ambitious sophist, who inspired them with this enthusiasm in favour of Mithridates, governed Athens like a tyrant; the worthy leader of a slavish people, whose ancient glory was reduced to disputes about words.

667. Sylla takes possession of Athens.

Mithridates having taken advantage of the troubles which prevailed in Rome, Sylla, as we formerly observed, at last set out to stop his career; and, passing into Greece, resolved to seize Athens and the Piræus at the same time. The money with which he had been supplied being insufficient, for he lavished it upon his soldiers to attach them to his interest, he seized upon the treasures of the temples, not even sparing that of Delphos. On receiving them, he said, smiling, *that his victory certainly could not be*

doubted, since his troops were paid by the gods. Though surrounded with dangers, the Athenians could not help retorting the raillery. A dreadful famine compelled them to sue for pardon; and their deputies, or rather the deputies of Aristion, were sent to harangue Sylla. They spoke loudly of Theseus and of Codrus; of the battles of Marathon and Salamis. *Go and repeat these fine discourses in your schools, ye vain conceited mortals,* said he, *I did not come here to learn your history, but to punish rebels.* The city was taken by storm, and given up to be plundered. But the conqueror, when he was about to give orders to raze it to the ground, relented, *and pardoned the living for the sake of the dead.* Such respect did the glory of the ancient heroes of Athens, and the great geniuses which she had formerly produced, still command, notwithstanding the abject state to which that famous republic had fallen. The Piræus was burnt to the ground, after Archelaus, one of the best generals of Mithridates, had been obliged to abandon it.

He gains two great victories.

All the hopes of the enemy were blasted by two complete victories gained by Sylla; the one at Cheronea and the other at Orchomenos. He acquired the more honour by the second battle, as it was on the point of being lost. Seeing his troops flying, he hastened to that quarter, dismounted from his horse, and, seizing a standard, exposed himself to the enemy, at the same time crying out to his flying army, *It shall be my glory that I perished here; but for you, if you are asked where you abandoned your general, you may answer at Orchomenos.* This was sufficient to make the Romans invincible.

At this time when Sylla was so employed in supporting the Roman cause, he was proscribed as an enemy of the republic. Cinna, who was chosen consul for the third time, in conjunction with Carbo, his colleague, exercised the most insufferable tyranny. Archelaus, thinking that Sylla would be glad in such a situation to bring the war to a speedy conclusion, made him an offer of every kind of assistance if he chose to return into Italy. The Roman general, incensed at the proposal, offered him in his turn to place him on the throne of Mithridates, if he would deliver up the fleet which was under his command. Archelaus replied, he abhorred treason. *What*, said Sylla, *shall you, a Cappadocian, the slave or friend of a king of barbarians, blush to purchase a crown at such a price, yet dare to talk of treachery to a Roman general, to Sylla?* He concluded, by prescribing the terms upon which a peace would be granted to Mithridates; that he should yield up all his conquests, and confine himself within his ancient territories; that he should return all his prisoners and the fugitive slaves; pay two thousand talents to the Romans, and likewise deliver to them seventy of his ships of war. To which terms Archelaus agreed, without waiting for instructions from Mithridates.

Rejects the offers made him by the general of Mithridates.

In the mean time, Valerius Flaccus, who had been appointed general by Cinna, came, by order of the senate, to deprive Sylla of the command; an order not easy to be executed. All his army, except two legions, forsook him, and joined the troops under Sylla. Flaccus, finding that he could do nothing against him, marched away for Byzantium to attack Mithridates, but

Flaccus sent against Sylla, killed by Fimbria.

was killed by his own lieutenant, the violent Fimbria, whom he had degraded, and who had not the least regard for duties of any kind. Fimbria immediately assumed the command, and began the war in Asia with considerable success. He encouraged his army by indulging them in licentiousness, and the liberty of plundering wherever they went, without foreseeing, that troops once corrupted will not long continue in subordination.

Death of Fimbria.

Mithridates requested an interview with Sylla, to whom he submitted upon the terms already proposed; and immediately after the conclusion of the treaty, Sylla marched against Fimbria, who was his personal enemy. He caused him to be summoned to come and give up the command of the army. But Fimbria refused; and, being forsaken by all his soldiers, after having endeavoured, in vain, to procure the assassination of the general, he fell upon his own sword. He had all the abilities and all the cruelty of Marius.

Sylla enriches his army.

The fortunate Sylla having thus overcome every obstruction, was unwilling to leave Asia till he had revenged the massacre of so many Romans. Plutarch says, that the contributions which were levied from the rebellious cities amounted to twenty thousand talents. His legions were cantoned over the whole country, where the inhabitants were obliged to pay each soldier sixteen drachmæ every day, besides lodging, and furnishing them with provision. Such a pernicious example foreboded the decay of discipline. 'Then,' says Sallust, 'was the first time that a Roman army was seen to have a passion for wine and women; a taste for sta-

tues, pictures, and carved vases; to rob individuals, cities, and temples; and, in a word, to pillage every thing both sacred and profane.' Every day this rapacious disposition increased more and more. As much as Sylla deserves to be censured for allowing discipline to be enervated, so much does he deserve to be admired, says Paterculus, for having suspended his resentment, and left his own interest neglected, until he had finished the war against Mithridates. 'He thought it his duty to crush the enemy, before he revenged the injuries done to him by his fellow citizens.' But all his glory was very soon tarnished by the cruelty of that revenge; and the adversary of Marius was for a time a faithful imitator of his inhumanity.

Disorders in Rome.

An universal disorder in the public finances, as well as in private fortunes, which was effected by the distrust, and the perpetual alarms to which the Romans had been for some time exposed; but, above all, by the loss of Asia, where the republic had an infinite number of settlements. The ruin of public credit by this violent shock, and the change that was made in the value of money, which occasioned every commercial transaction to be distrusted, all concurred to increase the distractions in Rome after the death of Marius. Cinna and Carbo, who were still consuls, had raised troops to oppose Sylla. The first of them fell in a military sedition, and the other demanded hostages from all the towns in Italy; but Castricius, the chief magistrate of Placentia, refusing to comply, *I have a number of swords*, said Carbo; *and I*, replied the magistrate, boldly, *a number of years.* A similar answer was said to have been given

by Solon to Pisistratus. It expresses the noble sentiments of an old man, who values life as nothing in comparison of virtue.

CHAPTER III.

RETURN OF SYLLA. HIS PROSCRIPTIONS. HIS DICTATORSHIP, AND HIS DEATH.

670. Return of Sylla. WHEN Sylla arrived with his army, which consisted only of about forty thousand men, he found above two hundred thousand in arms to oppose him; but he was beloved by his soldiers, and had the art to seduce the rest to join his party. Carbo, speaking of him said, *He is a lion and a fox. I dread the fox more than the lion.* A whole consular army, with Cethegus Verres, and Pompey, who, though very young, had made himself already eminent by his merit, together with many other of high rank, joined his standard. He animated the people, and inspired them with confidence. Crassus having demanded an escort when going to levy troops, because he was to cross a country in possession of the enemy; *I give you for an escort*, said Sylla, *your father, your brother, and your kindred, who have been inhumanly butchered, and whose murder I seek to revenge.* At these words, Crassus instantly set out, and executed his commission successfully.

He gains several great victories. The consul Norbanus was defeated in an action where he lost seven thousand men. The young Marius being consul next year, after

having, like his father, destroyed a great many of the senate, in his turn engaged Sylla, and saw his army cut to pieces. According to Sylla's memoirs, quoted by Plutarch, he lost only twenty-three men, though he killed twenty thousand of the enemy, and took eight thousand prisoners. How is it possible to credit this, if we believe what is said afterwards, that both armies fought for a considerable time with doubtful success!

Telesinus defeated.

A last victory, which was gained over the Samnites and the Lucanians, at the gates of Rome, was still more glorious for Sylla. These unconquerable enemies of the Roman name obstinately persisted in carrying on the *Social* war, under the command of Telesinus, who was a brave and able general; and were not defeated till after they had been victorious. Telesinus was killed in the field of battle. Sylla caused six thousand men to be cruelly massacred, who had laid down their arms, and to whom he had promised their lives. The rage of civil war had poisoned a character which seemed to have been more inclined to acts of beneficence and moderation than violence.

All his enemies proscribed.

In all the histories of human barbarity, there are few instances of enormous cruelty to be compared with the proscriptions of Sylla. Some person said to him, 'We do not ask mercy for those whom you are resolved to put to death, but that you would relieve from apprehension those whom you mean to save.' He answered, *I do not as yet know whom I mean to save.* 'Then name those whom you are resolved to destroy.' replied the other. The next day was published a list of fourscore who were proscribed, of

whom Marius and Carbo, the two consuls, were the first; the day following another list of two hundred and twenty; and a like number again on the third day. At last the tyrant declared that he would pardon none of his enemies.

Cruelty carried to the greatest extremity.

To afford any of them an asylum, though connected by the ties of blood, was a capital offence. The slave was invited by rewards to murder his master, and even the son to kill his father; the sum of two talents being paid for the head of every person proscribed. Property was confiscated, and even unborn generations were punished; for the grandchildren of those unfortunate people were declared infamous, and incapable of holding any office. Rome and the provinces were made scenes of dreadful butchery; for great numbers were sacrificed only because of their wealth. *It is my estate that has proscribed me*, said a peaceable quiet man, of the name of Aurelius, who lived far distant from all intrigues of state.

Catiline distinguishes himself in the proscription.

It is enough to mention, that Catiline, who had been the executioner of his brother and brother-in-law, was the principal minister in this dreadful havoc. After having presented to Sylla in the forum, the bloody head of a person who had been proscribed, he washed his hands in the lustral water of a temple, that he might equally insult religion and humanity.

Death of Marius and Carbo.

Marius being no longer able to defend Preneste, now Palestrina, to which he had retired, agreed with one of his friends that they should put one another to death; and, accordingly, they fell by mutual wounds. Carbo, the other consul, fled from Italy, and was pursued by

Pompey, who saw him prostrate at his feet, and ordered him to be put to death, though Carbo had a right to expect a proof of his gratitude. Thus the Romans revenged upon one another the cause of so many nations, who had been crushed by their ambition. Thus, the love of country being totally extinguished by every vicious habit, the people gave themselves up to the gratification of every violent passion, to wickedness and murder.

672. Sylla perpetual dictator.

One man being in possession of the whole authority, the republic was at an end. It was by his sword that he acquired and maintained his title; but he wanted one yet more respectable. As the very name of king would have made the Romans shudder with horror, he caused it to be proposed to the people, that a dictator should be appointed for an unlimited time, to repair the evils which the state had sustained; and declared, that if they thought proper to intrust him, he was willing to discharge the duties of that office. This was, in fact, appointing himself, though by his address he saved appearances. Thus perpetual despotism was established by the votes of the people, for no power upon earth was more arbitrary than that of a dictator.

Makes some good laws to restore order.

Sylla, who had made himself the tyrant of Rome, by seizing favourable opportunities of accomplishing his purposes, no sooner found that he was absolute master, than he made some very prudent laws to restore good order in the state. He curbed murder and oppression; he restored the courts of justice to the senate, into which he incorporated 300 knights, to fill up the vacancies occasioned by the war and

proscriptions; he so regulated the order of succession to offices, that no one could be appointed prætor till he had served the office of quæstor, nor consul without having previously been prætor. And, according to the ancient laws, he enacted, that an interval of ten years should pass before the same person could be re-elected consul. He limited the power of the tribuneship, by prohibiting the tribunes from intermeddling in legislation, by ordering that they should be chosen out of the body of the senate, and that they should not expect to rise to a higher dignity. From that time, the tribuneship afforded no temptation to the ambitious; for how was it to be expected that the first offices of the republic would be renounced?

675. He resigns the dictatorship.

After having destroyed a hundred thousand citizens in war, ninety senators, and above two thousand six hundred knights by proscriptions; after having established his power upon the ruin of so many families, so many cities, and even the republic herself, it can scarcely be conceived that Sylla should have inclination or courage to resign the dictatorship; however, he not only did so, but even declared that he was ready to give an account of his conduct. He used afterwards to walk in public without any guard, and with very few friends. But he freed ten thousand slaves, and raised them to the rank of citizens; he had given possessions in the colonies to his old soldiers; he had liberally rewarded his adherents, and they alone were in possession of all offices, both civil and military. He could not then be in want of protectors; and the terror of his name served him instead of guards. However, the very day on

which he abdicated, a young man had the insolence to affront him by abusive language. Sylla, without returning him any answer, only said, *That young man will be the cause that another in my situation will not think of resigning.*

Killed by his debauchery.

Pleasures and debauchery, to which he gave himself up more than ever, brought upon him the lousy disease, which put an end to his life, at the age of sixty. He preserved the activity of his genius to the very last, by being still engaged in public affairs, and employing himself in writing his memoirs, a curious work, which is not now extant. It is said that his epitaph, composed by himself, in substance declared, that *no man had ever done more good to his friends, or more harm to his enemies.* He had taken the surname of *The Fortunate*, either because he thought Fortune was attached to him, or wished to have it generally believed. But if he was fortunate in his enterprises, he was ignorant of real happiness, which is incompatible with the perplexities that agitate a soul under the dominion of the passions. Had he lived in an earlier age, he perhaps would have been a valuable citizen; but he was in some measure compelled to acts of cruelty by the ambition of Marius; and he only became an oppressor to check the oppressions of a cruel monster. Such is the power which circumstances have over the human mind, when it is no longer under prudent regulation.

676. Lepidus renews the civil wars, and is defeated.

From the example of Sylla, the people of Rome had been taught that the republic could be subdued by one of her own citizens; and thus factions were daily multiplied. The consul Lepidus, with very slender abilities, was

ambitious of governing, but was opposed by his colleague, Catulus; and if the senate had not obliged them to swear that they would not take up arms, the civil war would have been rekindled. At the expiration of his consulship, Lepidus thought himself disengaged from his promise, and marched with an army to Rome, in order to obtain the consulship a second time, by compulsion. Being repulsed and overcome by Catulus and Pompey, he passed over to Sardinia, where, hearing of the infidelity of his wife, he died with vexation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WAR OF SERTORIUS. SPARTACUS AT THE HEAD OF A BODY OF SLAVES. POMPEY DEFEATS THE PIRATES.

Sertorius keeps up the party of Marius in Spain.

SERTORIUS, a man truly formidable, revived the party of Marius in Spain. He was skilled in war, a profound politician, and possessed as much virtue as was practicable in the midst of vice and faction. After having suffered many misfortunes, he retired among the Lusitanians, where he was intrusted with the command of their army, and very soon acquired a dominion over the minds of those barbarians. A tame hind, by which he said he was miraculously informed of things which he discovered by his prudence, was not too rude an instrument to deceive their superstition; but to this expe-

dient he added others more effectual, victories and a prudent government.

His abilities and victories.

With a small army he maintained an obstinate war against a number of Roman generals, who commanded more than a hundred thousand men. The art of encamping, skilful marches, stratagems, sudden and seasonable attacks, without being exposed to risk, courage added to discipline, the admiration and confidence with which he inspired his soldiers, seemed to increase his power upon every occasion. During the life of Sylla, a number of illustrious malcontents fled to Sertorius for an asylum, and of them he formed an assembly, which he called the Roman senate. In fact, he might with some reason have used Corneille's expression, *Rome is no longer in Rome, but wherever I am.* *

678. He resists Pompey and Metellus.

Metellus, one of Sylla's lieutenants, having been unsuccessful in carrying on the war against him, Pompey was sent into Spain after the death of the dictator. Sertorius had been newly reinforced by a whole army, under the command of Perpenna, or Perperna, a seditious man, who attempted to obtain a settlement in that country, but was obliged by his soldiers to join that famous general. Pompey and Metellus, with their united force, were not able to overcome him; and the last of them was not ashamed to set a price upon his head. A hundred talents, and twenty thousand jugera of land, were promised as a reward to the assassin; and this policy, fit only for a band of robbers, exposed Sertorius to a thousand treacheries. He became severe, and a conspiracy

* 'Rome n'est plus dans Rome; elle est toute ou je suis.'

680. Perpenna causes him to be assassinated. was formed by the people about his person, headed by Perpenna, who caused him to be basely murdered at an entertainment.

Noble behaviour of Sertorius. A short time before his death, Sertorius received an embassy from Mithridates, who made him an offer of assistance, and desired the restitution of Asia; to which he nobly replied, that he would not prevent him from retaking Bithynia and Cappadocia, to which the Romans had no right; but as to Asia Minor, which was their lawful possession, he would not suffer it to be wrested from them. *I ought to employ my power to aggrandize the republic*, added he, *and not to aggrandize myself by the losses of my country.*

Pompey finishes the war. On the death of Sertorius, the whole strength of his party fell. The traitor, Perpenna, by taking upon him the command, only made the victory less difficult for Pompey. Being defeated and taken prisoner, he attempted to save his life by a new piece of treachery; offering the papers of Sertorius to the conqueror, by which his connexions with the principal people in Rome might be discovered. Pompey burnt the papers, and commanded Perpenna to be executed; after which, he ordered a splendid monument of his exploits to be erected, with an inscription, in which he boasted that he had reduced eight hundred and seventy-six cities, from the Alps to the most distant parts of Spain. We need not seek any other proof of the vanity of this famous general, who, notwithstanding his successes, was little entitled to the appellation of a great man, and who always desired to be thought a matchless hero.

Though only a knight, he was granted a

triumph; an honour which had been already conferred on him at his return from an expedition into Africa in the year 672. Sylla refusing his consent; *Think then*, said Pompey, haughtily, *that more people worship the rising, than the setting sun.* That daring expression made the dictator, though averse, yet give his consent.

War of the gladiators.

Rome, though accustomed to conquer other nations, but subdued, in her turn, by opulence and debauchery, was obliged to maintain a war equally dangerous and humiliating against her own slaves. The two rebellions of the slaves in Sicily show how much the Roman yoke was detested; but the present was a much more dreadful proof. A number of these unfortunate people, whom an unjust fate had reduced to slavery, mostly Gauls or Thracians, had been employed in the profession of gladiators against their wills. Seventy-eight of them, under the conduct of Spartacus, a Thracian, whose merit deserved a better fortune, broke their chains, and defeated some troops who were sent in pursuit of them. A prætor, at the head of three thousand men, met with the same disgrace. These first successes drawing to their standard a great many more slaves, the company of Spartacus at last became a numerous army, and so formidable, that two consuls and a prætor were sent against them. He defeated all the three, and with the more glory, as the Gauls, having left his army, were cut to pieces by the Romans.

682. They are defeated by Crassus.

Rome was threatened, and he might have laid siege to the city with a body of a hundred and twenty thousand slaves; but Crassus, one

of the best generals of the republic, was at last sent against him, who, by a prudent severity, having restored discipline, which had been almost annihilated, brought the war to a happy conclusion. Spartacus, being compelled by the slaves to come to a decisive engagement, conducted himself with equal skill and bravery. He killed his horse before the commencement of the battle. *If I am conqueror*, said he, *I shall not want a horse; but if I am conquered, I shall have no occasion for one.* Victory was for a considerable time doubtful; but at last the slaves were defeated, and their heroic chief, all covered with wounds, expired in the heat of action. The rebels lost forty thousand men.

Pompey ascribes the honour of the victory to himself.

Five thousand of the fugitives having rallied, were easily defeated by Pompey, who wrote to the senate in the same style as if he had saved the republic. *Crassus has gained a victory over the slaves, but I have destroyed the very seeds of rebellion.* This ambitious man made every thing turn to his own advantage; and, by exaggerating his services, dazzled the multitude. To get the whole power into his hands, he wanted to have it believed that he was essentially necessary to them in all their affairs; and they readily gave credit to his assertions. Being chosen consul when only thirty-four years of age, and without having served the office of quæstor, he annulled the best laws which were made by Sylla. He restored the ancient powers to the tribunes; and, by flattering the prejudices of the people, became their idol. His colleague and rival, the wealthy Crassus, fruitlessly endeavoured to acquire equal popularity, by giving a feast at ten thousand tables, and

distributing corn to the poor for three months. This immense profusion, though perhaps the very best means of captivating a corrupt multitude, could not avail against the excessive credit in which Pompey stood with the people.

The seas were infested by a swarm of pirates, who had issued from the coasts of Cilicia, and pillaged even the temples, laid waste the provinces, ruined commerce, and occasioned a dreadful famine. No man was thought capable of subduing them but Pompey. A law was proposed by the tribune Gabinius, to appoint him to the command, with a power to levy as many soldiers and sailors as he pleased; to draw as much money from the public treasury as he thought necessary, without being obliged to give an account of it; and to choose fifteen lieutenants from the senate. His authority was to extend over the whole Mediterranean, and fifty miles within land; his commission to continue three years. The most vigorous resistance was made to this detestable law, which tended to make a monarch of a private citizen; and even Pompey, from false modesty, affected to oppose it. However, it was passed, and with the greater advantage to him, as he was allowed five hundred ships, and a hundred and twenty-five thousand land forces, with six thousand Attic talents. In four months the pirates were totally dispersed, and the popular enthusiasm in favour of the general increased. If he did not abuse his power, it was from a dread of being suspected of tyranny. By this seeming moderation, he hoped to increase his power; nor was he disappointed; and a new theatre was opened to him by the war in Asia.

686. Acquires immoderate power.

CHAPTER V.

THE WAR WITH MITHRIDATES ENDED. LUCULLUS SUPPLANTED BY POMPEY.

Mithridates renewed the war.

THE implacable hatred which Mithridates entertained against the Romans made him submit to necessity only, in hopes of more favourable opportunities; and he had twice renewed the war since the departure of Sylla. About the time that Sertorius signalized himself in Spain, Nicomedes, king of Bithynia, entered into a league with the Roman republic; and the king of Pontus was resolved to wrest Bithynia from a people who were ambitious to give law to the whole world. Instructed by experience, he banished the pomp of Asia from his army, and, in its place, substituted the arms and discipline of the Romans; in short, his troops were well trained, and he himself a skilful warrior.

679. Lucullus sent against him.

In the year 679, the two consuls, Cotta and Lucullus, were sent against him. To a taste for learning and the sciences, Lucullus added every military talent, which he acquired by having served under Sylla in the office of quæstor; and, of course, Cicero greatly exaggerates when he says, that he learnt to be a general only from books and conversation during his passage from Rome to Asia. As soon as Lucullus assumed the command, he gave proofs of superior genius; he checked the avarice of the tax-gatherers, and the licentiousness of the

army; he saved his colleague, who had been defeated by Mithridates, and made that prince raise the siege of Cyzicum, with the loss, as it is said, of three hundred thousand men, driving him first out of Bithynia, and then out of his own kingdom. It was upon this occasion that that cruel monarch gave orders to poison his sisters and wives, particularly the famous Monimia, to prevent their falling into the hands of the conqueror.

He defeats Tigranes, king of Armenia.

Having retired into the territories of his son-in-law, Tigranes, king of Armenia, he persuaded him to espouse his cause, and join in the quarrel; but that monarch, with an innumerable army, and immense treasures, was only a composition of silly pride and blind temerity. In the year 684, Lucullus passed the Euphrates and the Tigris without any difficulty, because it was not imagined that he would have been bold enough to make the attempt, and then marched against the Armenians, who were twenty times his number. Some person observing to him that that was an unlucky day, and marked so in the calendar: *Very well*, said he, *I will make it a lucky day*. In fact, the enemy were cut to pieces, and his victory was followed by the taking of Tigranocerta. The next year he passed mount Taurus. Tigranes and Mithridates having joined, he attacked them, and put them to flight. Nothing could equal the Roman valour; but they had lost some virtues of no less consequence.

Mutinous disposition of his army.

Though possessed of the greatest abilities, Lucullus had not the talent of making himself beloved. Both officers and soldiers bore his haughtiness and severity in support of disci-

pline with the greater impatience, as they were led by the corruption of their manners into every kind of licentiousness. They very well knew that there were people at Rome who inveighed against him, because they were envious of his merit, and accused him of prolonging the war from views of interest and ambition. His army mutinied several times; and Tigranes and Mithridates took that opportunity to recover their kingdoms. A Roman army, commanded by Triagrius, was totally defeated; and Lucullus saw himself abandoned by his soldiers at the very time he was anxious to repair the misfortune.

687. The Manilian law.

This circumstance was equally disgraceful to Rome and favourable to Pompey. The pirates had been lately reduced, and their conqueror was still in Asia, which made his adherents zealously seize the opportunity. Manilius, the tribune, proposed that Lucullus should be recalled, and the command of the war against Tigranes and Mithridates be given to Pompey, with all the powers granted him by the Gabinian law; by which he was intrusted with the whole force of the republic, and made absolute both by sea and land. The republicans exclaimed with indignation; but Cæsar flattered the multitude, that he might raise himself above all law. Cicero, at that time prætor, and who stood in need of Pompey's friendship, with other eminent persons who were hurried away by the torrent, or led by selfish motives, or dazzled by the splendid reputation of the general, concurred in support of the Manilian law. The inconsiderate multitude gave way to their present passion, with-

out once reflecting that they might one day become the victim of their own rashness.

Pompey conceals his ambition.

Here we have an instance to what low, gross hypocrisy, ambition will sometimes stoop. Pompey had employed every means to accomplish this affair; and when he received the news, the better to conceal his satisfaction, he assumed an appearance of sorrow. 'Shall I never enjoy repose? said he. Cannot I have leave to live in retirement with a beloved wife? Happy they who can pass their days in the peaceful bosom of obscurity!' Even his friends were shocked at this hypocrisy; but it had its effect upon the vulgar, for they are easily deceived by appearances.

He undervalues the services of Lucullus.

If Pompey had been worthy of his good fortune, he at least would have respected the merits and services of Lucullus; but, on the contrary, he endeavoured to humble him, and, without the least reserve, undervalued whatever he had done. He alleged that Lucullus had no difficulties to encounter, and had no other view in prosecuting the war but accumulating riches. Lucullus, wounded by such injurious language, reproached his rival, with more reason, of being desirous to appropriate to himself the honours which were due to another; of having been solicitous to obtain the command against enemies already conquered; and of coming, at the end of every war, to snatch the honour of concluding it out of the hands of the general, like those cowardly birds who only prey upon carcases. Their mutual animosity was sharpened by an interview; but, as his victories could not be forgotten, a triumph was decreed to Lucullus.

Lucullus retires. His magnificence,

That noble Roman passed the rest of his life in luxurious retirement, but it was dedicated to study, and the pleasures of his friends. That magnificence and luxury which, after the conquests in Asia, could not fail to change the Roman manners, was never carried to such a pitch as by him. One day that he was without company, his steward caused a supper to be served up to him which was less sumptuous than common. *Do you not know*, said he, out of humour, *that Lucullus is to sup to-night with Lucullus?* Here we see one of the greatest men of the republic metamorphosed, if we may use the expression, into a Persian satrap.

Mithridates forms a project to carry the war into Italy.

Mithridates being weakened by so many losses, and abandoned by his allies, whom either fear or artifice had united with Rome, very soon sunk under the exertions of a too powerful enemy, from whom he fled till he reached the Bosphorus. However, his courage never forsook him; and he was proposing to trace the steps of Hannibal, and carry the war into Italy, when a rebellion was stirred up against him by his son Pharnaces. While he was besieged in one of his castles by the rebels, after having tried poison unsuccessfully, he stabbed himself with his sword. That cruel distrust which he had even of his own family, could not save him from treachery; and though he was always beset with domestic enemies, he had the honour of resisting the Romans for almost thirty years. At the news of his death, they expressed the most indecent joy; and Pharnaces obtained the kingdom of Bosphorus as a reward of his parricide.

The expedition of Pompey into Asia.

Instead of pursuing Mithridates, Pompey attacked the kingdom of Syria, which had been always torn in pieces by intestine wars. Tigranes had been in possession of it for eighteen years; but Antiochus XIII. surnamed Asiaticus, and the lawful heir of the Seleucidæ, had been settled in it by Lucullus, who was stript of it by Pompey, for no other reason but to destroy the work of Lucullus; and it was reduced into a Roman province without opposition. From thence he passed into Judea, and declared in favour of Hyrcanus, against his brother Aristobulus, who contended with him for the crown; forced the temple of Jerusalem, carried off Aristobulus prisoner, and restored the dignity of high-priest, with the title of prince of the Jews, to Hyrcanus. After distributing immense riches among his soldiers, which Appian says amounted to sixteen thousand talents, he returned to Italy. Every foot soldier had fifteen hundred drachmæ. Thus did the generals purchase troops and adherents at the expense of the republic.

Pompey indulges his friends in every liberty.

Pompey was never seen to imitate that magnificence and luxury which was become so common, but he winked at the licentiousness of his friends, and gave up the people to their avarice and oppression. His freedman, Demetrius, being immensely rich, displayed all the insolence of a slave, who had attained the summit of power. Is it possible to praise the moderation of a man, whose friends, and even slaves, indulge in every kind of licentiousness under his protection?

CHAPTER VI.

CONSPIRACY OF CATILINE. THE TRIUMVIRATE OF POMPEY, CRASSUS, AND CÆSAR.

Catiline's conspiracy.

BEFORE the return of Pompey, Rome narrowly escaped being buried in her own ruins, by the wickedness of some of her citizens. Catiline, descended of an illustrious family, of a fiery temper, which no danger could dismay, yet capable of the deepest dissimulation; overwhelmed with debts, stained with the foulest crimes, and having no resource but what was suggested by despair, formed a scheme for extirpating the whole body of senators, and, like Sylla, seizing the sovereign authority. To carry his point, he employed every means of corruption, money, pleasures, promises, and hopes. The debauched, the discontented, the ambitious, the insatiable and bankrupt nobility, the heedless and giddy multitude, every one as they were led by their prevailing passion, flocked in crowds to join his party. A superior genius was needful to save the republic; and that glory was reserved for Cicero.

690. The plot discovered to Cicero.

This excellent orator, whose virtue, understanding, and abilities would have been still more admired if their lustre had not been a little obscured by vanity, canvassed for the consular dignity when the conspiracy of Catiline was discovered to him by a woman. Curius, one of the conspirators, was in love with Fulvia,

and seeing himself despised, after he had sacrificed to her his whole fortune, hoped to recover her favour by discovering the conspiracy, and making a display of the riches which he hoped to acquire. A woman who had proved unfaithful to her husband, could not be otherwise to a disgraced lover. Fulvia discovered the secret, and it reached the ears of Cicero. Notwithstanding the intrigues of the nobility, who despised him because he was a new man, yet so ably did he employ his knowledge of that secret, that he obtained the consulship. His competitor Catiline was excluded, and Anthony given to him for a colleague, whose indolence was such as to leave him all the credit of the administration.

He prevents it from taking effect

The enraged Catiline, still more animated with a desire of vengeance, hurried on the execution of his designs. A day was fixed for setting fire to the city in different quarters, and in the confusion to assassinate the leaders of the senate, particularly Cicero; to seize the Capitol; to renew, and even surpass all the horrors committed by Sylla; but Cicero, from whose prudence nothing could be hid, was watchful for the preservation of the republic, and discovered the whole conspiracy to the senate; upon which an unlimited power was immediately given to the consuls, according to the form commonly used in cases of extraordinary danger. The eloquence of the orator filled Catiline with confusion, and drove him from Rome. The other leaders of the conspiracy were seized, convicted, and condemned to suffer death by a decree of the senate, which sentence was executed during the night in the prison. A

body of troops marched against Catiline, who, with a number of rebels, had advanced towards Gaul, in order to raise and to excite an insurrection in that country. He was attacked, and made a brave defence; but, being irrecoverably defeated, he threw himself into the midst of the enemy, and fell all covered with wounds. He was one of those men who are born to perform great actions, but, by being slaves to their passions, seem to be only capable of enormous wickedness.

Agrarian law of Rullus.

Before the conspiracy was discovered, Cicero, even with the approbation of the people, had rejected an Agrarian law, proposed by Rullus the tribune, bearing, that ten commissioners should be appointed for five years, with almost unlimited authority. Such laws at a time when ambition was so violent, and integrity uncommon, could only tend to overturn the state, for they could not possibly be executed without occasioning civil wars. The decemvirs would have employed their power to amass fortunes; the people would have had new tyrants, and the republic new masters. Rullus intended to get the power into his own hands, and he affected a zeal for the good of the public only to conceal his selfish views.

The rise of Cæsar.

Julius Cæsar, the son-in-law of Cinna, a patrician, who greatly surpassed Rullus both by the lustre of his birth and the superiority of his abilities, was silently forming the greatest enterprises. His effeminacy, his taste for dress, his libertinism in his early days, seemed to prognosticate that he would be a man of pleasure, from whom Rome had nothing either to hope or fear; and, to save him from proscrip-

tion, he was represented as such to Sylla. But the dictator was a better judge of his character. *Do you not see in that young man*, said he, *more than one Marius?* Upon hearing this, Cæsar fled from Rome; but the moment he could enter into the career of ambition, he appeared with all the advantages of manly eloquence and profound policy. To gain the attachment of the people to his interest, he exhausted his patrimony in largesses to the people and the exhibition of public shows. He purchased offices with impunity, and revived the spirits of the remaining adherents to the party of Marius.

Anecdotes of his character.

The pursuit of honour and glory possessed his whole soul. One day, when he was reading the life of Alexander, *Alas*, said he, with tears in his eyes, *Alexander had conquered a number of kingdoms at my age, whereas I have yet done nothing worthy notice.* Upon another occasion, when he was passing through a little village in the Alps, and hearing one of his attendants ask in a tone of raillery, whether they canvassed for the offices in that place, he answered, *I would rather be the first man in this village than the second in Rome.* Such instances display a man's real character.

693. He artfully reconciles Pompey and Crassus.

But Pompey, at his return to Rome in the year 692, being accustomed to government and success, would not endure either a superior or an equal. Naturally an enemy to oppression, perhaps rather from weakness than moderation, he dismissed his army immediately upon their arrival, having imprudently flattered himself with the belief that he would continue master of the republic without their assistance. He found a formidable enemy in Crassus, who, by his immense riches, had gained a very strong

party. These two rivals entertained a most inveterate hatred against each other; and their influence in the senate was nearly equal. Cæsar wanted to be consul; and having occasion for the aid of one of these rivals, which it was impossible for him to obtain without making the other his enemy, by a masterstroke in politics, of which no other man was capable, reconciled them, and united his interest with theirs; or rather, by procuring this union, established his own upon their joint credit. Cato, so famous for that stoical virtue which he carried to excess, foresaw that liberty would be destroyed by this triumvirate. However, a reconciliation, which seemed to extinguish the flame of discord, was universally applauded.

The triumvirate.

Immediately after Cæsar had obtained the consulship by the interest of Pompey and Crassus, he proposed an Agrarian law, by which he hoped to gain the favour of the people. This law was not attended with the inconveniences to which the former was exposed. It was limited to certain lands in the country of Campania, which were to be divided among twenty thousand poor citizens, who had at least three children. It was couched in such terms as to remove every suspicion of tyranny; but, nevertheless, it was opposed by Cato and Bibulus the consul, and by the greatest part of the senate, so that the triumvirate were obliged to have recourse to the people. Pompey and Crassus loudly declared for the law; and Bibulus being driven out of the assembly with insult, the senate was reduced to silence, and obliged to drop all opposition.

Cæsar passes an Agrarian law.

Cæsar was master of such infinite address, that he never failed to accomplish his purpose. He gave his daughter in marriage to Pompey, lest the zealous republicans should deprive him of this support. He caused a law to be passed, by which the senators and magistrates were obliged to take an oath, that they would never propose any thing in opposition to what had been determined by the popular assemblies during his consulship; but, dreading the zeal and eloquence of Cicero, he procured the tribuneship to the orator's mortal enemy, the seditious Clodius, who had been lately accused of profaning the mysteries of the *Bona Dea*, and even with having an intrigue with the wife of Cæsar. And, lastly, foreseeing that a military power would enable him to execute all his purposes, he procured the government of Gaul for five years, with the command of four legions.

Secures Pompey and gets rid of Cicero.

A law was proposed very soon after by Clodius, to declare criminal whoever had put a citizen to death before the judgment of the people had been obtained. This was a battery levelled against Cicero, who had put to death the accomplices of Catiline before sentence had been passed on them by the people. But in this he only obeyed the orders of the senate, and his conduct was amply vindicated by the necessity of the conjuncture. He no sooner saw himself attacked, than the want of resolution betrayed the powers of his genius. Dressed in mourning, dejected, and suppliant, he begged for assistance, but could find none; the ungrateful Pompey shut his gate against him. Cicero prevented the decree for his banishment, quitted

695. Clodius oppresses Cicero.

Rome, and retired to Greece. His excessive sorrow, his bitter complaints against his best friends, prove that his philosophy, of which he made such parade, was more the language of his head than of his heart.

He removes Cato.

Clodius, desirous likewise to get rid of Cato, that inflexible republican, who incessantly continued to combat vice and tyranny, employed him to dethrone Ptolemy king of Cyprus. That prince was the personal enemy of the tribune, who procured him to be condemned as an enemy of the republic, but Ptolemy *poisoned* himself before the arrival of Cato.

696. Pompey obtains the recal of Cicero.

Pompey at last became sensible of his mistake. Clodius no longer paid court to him, and Cæsar's first campaign in Gaul seemed to have eclipsed all his glory. Jealous of the one, and exasperated against the other, he procured the recal of Cicero, whom he had so meanly abandoned. Cicero, at his return, was loaded with honours. He passed through Italy in a kind of triumph, and his houses were rebuilt at the expence of the public. Pompey very soon found the benefit of his credit. A scarcity of corn afforded him an opportunity of procuring for his friend the superintendance of provisions through the whole empire, with very extensive powers, for five years. By such commissions, the property of the public was put into the hands of a few ambitious men, who easily accumulated great fortunes.

697. Commands granted to the triumvirs.

As the triumvirate had occasion for mutual support, they entered into new engagements. Pompey and Crassus were made consuls, with important governments, for five years. The first in Spain, and the other in Syria, Greece,

and Egypt. The friends of Cæsar refused their consent, except upon condition that he should be likewise continued five years in the government of Gaul. These three generals were authorized to levy as many troops, and to exact from the kings, and other allies of Rome, as much money and other assistance as they deemed necessary; which was, in fact, making them absolute.

700. Crassus defeated, and killed by the Parthians. Murder of Clodius.

The insatiable Crassus, who heaped up treasure upon treasure, who said that no man was rich unless he was able to support an army, and who, undoubtedly, was still poor himself amidst all his opulence, made haste to enter Asia, that he might satiate his avaricious desires. Having pillaged the temple of Jerusalem, he engaged in an imprudent expedition against the Parthians, induced by no motive but the hope of ravishing from them their immense riches. But the Parthians were a warlike people, who, from their dexterity in archery, and skill in horsemanship, were even formidable in their flight; so that, in the end, Crassus and his son were killed in the field, and the whole Roman army cut in pieces. The balance of power which he held between Cæsar and Pompey was now broken; discord could not fail to follow; and nothing was to be seen at Rome but factions and every kind of disorder. All employments were purchased openly, and their canvassings were attended with acts of violence. Clodius was killed by Milo, which served as a signal for taking up arms.

701. Pompey sole consul.

Upon this occasion the friends of Pompey endeavoured to get him chosen dictator, which

was what he secretly wished; but Cato, for the preservation of liberty, by keeping him subject to the laws, proposed that there should be no other consul, because in that case he would be still accountable for his conduct. Though it was without precedent, Pompey was chosen sole consul, with a grant of new troops and a revenue of a thousand talents to support his army, at the same time the government of Spain was continued to him, with a power of administering it by his lieutenants. He chose a colleague before the expiration of his consulship, and, by this feigned moderation, blinded the senate.

CHAPTER VII.

CONQUEST OF GAUL. BREACH BETWEEN CÆSAR AND POMPEY. A CIVIL WAR.

Success of Cæsar in Gaul.

In less than ten years, Cæsar had overcome the Helvetians, defeated Ariovistus, one of the kings of Germany, subdued the Belgæ, reduced all Gaul into a Roman province, and carried the terror of his arms even into Great Britain. Among his exploits are reckoned the taking of eight hundred towns, reducing three hundred states, and defeating three millions of men in different actions. The Gauls were a brave people, but divided into small states, under chiefs who had but little authority. It was not solely by his valour and military talents that he redu-

ced them, but likewise by his artful policy, which he employed in fomenting their quarrels, and arming them against one another.

His conduct to make himself master of Rome.

Intrepid, sober, indefatigable, always ready for action, always attentive to business, and even, while pursuing the enemy, watching the intrigues carried on at Rome, he spared no cost to purchase votes and secure followers; the consul Emilius alone cost him a hundred and fifty talents. He enriched his officers and soldiers, who were no longer the troops of the state. In a word, he did without scruple whatever could advance his power, and every obstacle was surmounted by his extraordinary abilities.

Open rupture between Cæsar and Pompey.

The term of his government was drawing to an end, and, by depriving him of his military command, was to reduce him to a level with his fellow-citizens. This was the private wish of Pompey, who secretly solicited his recal; but Curio the tribune, who had been bought over by Cæsar, warded off that blow without seeming to be of either party. He proposed that both these generals should either be continued or recalled, as they were equally capable of disturbing the republic. Whatever moderation might be affected by Pompey, yet he was unwilling to lay down his command before Cæsar; therefore, Curio was of opinion, that both the one and the other, if they kept possession of their governments, should be declared enemies of the republic. Cæsar offered to resign, upon condition that his rival should; but Pompey, who was not so able nor clear-sighted, being persuaded that Cæsar's army would abandon their general, carried his rash confidence

so far, as to say, *That he needed only to stamp upon the ground, and an army would start up.*

The latter rejects all terms of accommodation.

After some negotiations, he rejected every means of accommodation that was proposed, and thereby rendered a civil war inevitable. The consuls and senate were of his party; the people, and a victorious army, commanded by the greatest general the world ever saw, was on the other. The first had a greater appearance of justice; the other, superior abilities, courage, and a greater variety of resources. The most unspotted justice, in such circumstances, would find herself too weak to contend.

704. Cæsar passes the Rubicon.

Cæsar was declared an enemy of Rome if he refused to resign the command; and Pompey, though he was not consul, was intrusted with the defence of the republic. Cæsar was on the banks of the Rubicon, a small river which parted Cisalpine Gaul from the rest of Italy, where he hesitated for some time. *If I do not pass,* said he, *I am ruined; if I do pass, to what woes is Rome exposed!* But, recollecting the hatred of his adversaries, he exclaimed, *The die is cast!* passed the river, took possession of Rimini, and spread the alarm even to the centre of Rome. The senate declared that there was a *tumult;* that is to say, the city was in danger, and that all the citizens, without exception, should fly to arms.

705. Battle of Pharsalia.

No preparations had been made against an enemy so active and formidable. Pompey not only left the city, but likewise quitted Italy. Cæsar, having made himself master of the public treasury, from whence he drew an immense sum, set out to reduce Spain, where his opponents were very powerful. He returned vic-

torious, and, pursuing his rival into Macedonia, gained the decisive battle of Pharsalia. In this action, it was evidently seen, that superiority of numbers avails nothing against courage and discipline. A crowd of young patricians, enervated by luxury, placed a blind confidence in Pompey, and calculated beforehand the advantages of a victory which they concluded was certain. Cæsar, observing that a dread of being disfigured would make a stronger impression upon them than a thirst of glory, ordered his veterans to aim at their faces, and, in fact, they were very soon routed. The conqueror found in the camp of the enemy the whole apparatus of Asiatic luxury.

Cæsar's moderation.

He threw all Pompey's papers into the fire without reading one. *I would rather not be acquainted with crimes*, said he, *than be obliged to punish them.* He sighed heavily at seeing the field of battle covered with dead bodies, and at least endeavoured to repair, by an heroic clemency, the evils of which he was obliged to be the author.

Pompey assassinated.

The famous Pompey, who had so long been master of the republic, and, in some degree, of fortune, but now vanquished, a fugitive and wanderer, fled at last into Egypt, where he hoped to find a secure asylum from young Ptolemy, whose father Auletes, after his expulsion by the inhabitants of Alexandria, he had re-established on the throne; but how few friends does misfortune leave! Cæsar pursued him with great eagerness, and the court of Egypt hesitated for some time what part they should take; but at last, being led by the base counsels of Theodotus the rhetorician, they were

persuaded to commit an act of treachery and cruel murder, as the only means of gaining the favour of Cæsar; they professed to receive Pompey with open arms, and, at that instant, caused him to be assassinated. They presented his head to his antagonist; but, instead of showing that pleasure which they expected, he only gave signs of indignation and sorrow.

War of Alexandria.

Cleopatra, the sister and wife of the king of Egypt, was entitled, by their father's will, to share the throne with him, and supported her claim by force of arms. Cæsar took upon him to decide the dispute in the name of the Roman people; and the beauty of Cleopatra inspired him with sentiments which gave room to suspect his impartiality. For this reason, Photinus, the minister of Ptolemy, kindled the war of Alexandria, in which both the king and his minister perished. Cæsar, having placed Cleopatra upon the throne, instantly marched to oppose Pharnaces, the son of Mithridates and king of Bosphorus, who was making extensive conquests in Asia. He gave an account of his expedition in three words, *Veni, vidi, vici.* *

706. He returns to Rome, where he is absolute.

Having been made consul for five years, dictator one year, perpetual chief of the college of tribunes, with authority to make peace or war, as he judged proper, he appeared again at Rome in two years after his passage over the Rubicon, in possession of absolute power. Far from following the example of Sylla, who wanted to secure his power by sacrificing his fellow-citizens, he was eager to offer pardon to all, and even heaped acts of kindness upon a number

* I came, I saw, I overcame.

of his principal enemies; but as yet all were not subdued. During his stay in Egypt, where an indiscreet amour made him neglect his affairs, the sons of Pompey, Cato, Scipio, and some other republicans, had collected a body of forces in Africa, where they prepared to make a vigorous defence. But who could conquer Cæsar?

War in Africa.

Having crossed the sea, he gained three battles successively. Cato had fruitlessly recommended to his party not to expose their army to the hazard of a defeat; and, shutting himself up in Utica, seemed to revive the Roman senate, and to preserve some ideas of liberty. But his hopes very soon vanished. He saw all around him entirely disheartened, and proposed to his friends, either to fly, or implore mercy from the conqueror; but, for himself, he was determined not to survive the liberty of his country. After having calmly conversed with two philosophers, and read the dialogue of Plato upon the immortality of the soul, feeling the point of his sword, he said, *I am at last my own master.* Having slept some time, when he waked, he stabbed himself. At the noise, some of his friends ran to offer their assistance, and dressed the wound; but he tore it open, and expired. Upon the news being brought to Cæsar, he exclaimed, *O Cato! I envy thee thy death, since thou didst envy me the honour of preserving thy life!* It would, indeed, have been more glorious to save than to conquer such an enemy.

Cato kills himself.

That virtuous Roman wanted prudence.

If Cato had not been an enthusiast in virtue, and had endeavoured, by some practicable methods, to correct disorder, instead of rigidly

censuring the manners of the times, his patriotism and greatness of soul might have effected much good, or prevented much evil; but the observation of Cicero is very just, by conducting himself *as if he was in the republic of Plato, and not among the dregs of Romulus.* His severity was seldom useful, sometimes hurtful. These were not the days of Fabricius. Rome, immersed in corruption, could no longer be governed by the ancient principles. It was necessary to comply with circumstances, and the exigencies of affairs. Cato made himself respectable, by observing maxims sunk in oblivion; but he miscarried, by endeavouring to force the observation of them on others. Ought prudence to attempt impossibilities?

CHAPTER VIII.

CÆSAR MAKES HIMSELF MASTER OF THE REPUBLIC. HIS DEATH.

708. Honours lavished upon Cæsar.

THE honours which were lavished upon Cæsar at his return, sufficiently prove that nothing but the mere shadow of republican government was left. A solemn thanksgiving to the gods was appointed for his victories. The dictatorship was at first prolonged to him for ten years, and afterwards for life; with the title of reformer of manners. The authority of censor, which was formerly shared by two magistrates, was conferred upon him alone; his person was declared inviolably sacred; his

statue was placed in the Capitol, by the side of Jupiter's, with the following sacrilegious inscription, *To the demigod, Cæsar!* Four triumphs were decreed to him in one month; upon which occasion, gold and silver vases were displayed to the amount of sixty-five thousand talents.

His prodigality. His prodigality to his soldiers and the people, the entertainments, games, and magnificent shows which he exhibited, delighted the multitude, whom the charms of pleasure allured to slavery. A feast which was served up on twenty-two thousand tables in the streets of the city, gives us an idea of his profusion. So much were the manners of the Romans at this time corrupted, that the knights were not ashamed to fight in the *arena* with the common gladiators.

He reestablishes order. The mildness of Cæsar's disposition, his application to the cares of government, and the prudence of his laws, were the best instruments for varnishing his ambitious attempts. He reestablished good order in the city, and attracted to it a number of inhabitants; encouraged population by rewards; checked extravagant luxury; and limited the duration of the government of the provinces, fixing the prætorian to one year, and the consular to two.

He reforms the calendar. In quality of sovereign pontiff, he reformed the calendar, into which the pontiffs, either through ignorance, or from some interested motives, had introduced the greatest confusion. The year, at that time, according to their computation, consisted of twelve lunar months, with an intercalation of twenty-two or twenty-three days alternately, at the end of

every two years; but the pontiffs either introduced or omitted the intercalation, according to circumstances, as they wanted to abridge or to prolong the time of the magistrates continuing in office; and by this means all order was subverted. Sosigenes, an astronomer of Alexandria, cleared up this chaos, and the solar year of three hundred and sixty-five days, with an intercalation of one day every fourth year was established by Cæsar. Beside the intercalary month, it was necessary to add sixty-seven days to the first year.

This reformation censured.

Even this excellent reformation, which deserved the highest encomiums, was censured, like every thing which offends old customs and vulgar prejudices. Cicero himself, who was more capable than any man of seeing its merit, made it a subject of indecent raillery. Hearing it observed, that a certain constellation was to rise next day: *Yes*, said he, *and by order of Cæsar*. It was a great discredit to this able orator, that he sacrificed every thing to a witticism. Can the truly wise man ever allow himself to be guilty of an act of injustice?

Cæsar made perpetual dictator.

The two sons of Pompey having stirred up their friends in Spain to take arms, Cæsar hastened to that quarter, and, by a victory which he gained at Munda, gave liberty a mortal blow. He entered Rome in triumph, as if he had defeated the enemies of the republic, and being named perpetual dictator and emperor, endeavoured more than ever to gain the hearts of the people. He even dismissed his guards, He caused the statues of Pompey to be replaced; and, to increase rewards, added a number of new offices. He heaped favours upon

many of his mortal enemies, and filled the senate with his own creatures; but he greatly debased its dignity, by introducing six hundred senators, most of them unworthy of that rank, whom he employed as instruments of his ambition. We shall soon see the military title of *Emperor*, which had been formerly conferred by the soldiers as merely honorary, very soon become a title of sovereignty.

709. He provokes the republicans.

Some zealous republicans detested the thought of a power destructive to the ancient government, and the dictator exasperated them either by his pride or indiscretion. One day when the senate came in a body to decree new honours to him, he did not condescend to rise from his tribunal, and even the populace were offended with this instance of contempt. Some time after, when Mark Antony, his colleague in the consulship, publicly made him an offer of a diadem, the populace applauded his having refused it, but his real purpose was to sound the dispositions of the people; and it was not long before it was known that he wished for the title of King, so hateful to the Romans. A word sometimes may have very considerable influence on the minds of men; but while Cæsar enjoyed supreme and absolute authority, what occasion had he for a title, which could only serve to alarm the minds of the people?

Conspiracy of Cassius and Brutus.

A conspiracy, headed by Cassius, was immediately formed. Among a number whom he engaged to join him was Marcus Brutus, a descendant of the first consul, the son-in-law and imitator of Cato; whom Cæsar loved with the affection of a father, having not only spared his life, but loaded him with favours and ad-

mitted him into his friendship, without being able to overcome his detestation of an usurped power. Some anonymous writings which Brutus, at that time prætor, found upon his tribunal, roused the republican sentiments in his mind. There was written upon them; *Brutus, thou sleepest; thou art no longer the same.* Being staggered by these indirect methods, Cassius at last entirely brought him over by his discourse.

Portia's courage.

Portia, the illustrious daughter of Cato, and wife of Brutus, observing that he was exceedingly agitated, and concealed from her some affair of consequence, made a deep wound in her thigh, on purpose to try her fortitude in resisting pain. Being satisfied that even torments could not wring a secret from her, she discovered the wound to Brutus, and, acquainting him with the design she had in executing this hardy deed, obtained the confidence she so much desired. *Grant me, O heaven,* cried Brutus, *that I may prove myself a husband worthy of Portia!* The very soul of Cato, whom philosophy raised superior to all the men of his time, animated his daughter.

Cæsar assassinated.

The scheme was laid to assassinate the dictator in full senate, when he was on the point of carrying the war into Asia, to revenge the defeat of Crassus by the Parthians. Some suspicions and forebodings, rather than the pretended oracles which have been mentioned by every historian, made him hesitate about going to the meeting of the senate; but imagining, as his flatterers told him, that his preservation was of consequence to the state, and that no attempt durst be made against his life, he ex-

posed himself without taking any steps for the security of his person. The conspirators surrounding him, stabbed him with their daggers, when, at sight of Brutus, he cried out, *And thou too, Brutus!* After which, without attempting any longer to defend himself, he covered his face with his robe, and, at the age of fifty-five, this great hero met his death, like a man who needed not to regret the loss of life.

Reflections upon this murder.

According to the laws and maxims of the Roman republic, whoever attempted to usurp a sovereign authority was held an enemy of his country, and exposed to suffer from the hands of his fellow-citizens. Cæsar, therefore, being in possession of the whole power, was, in the eye of the law, undoubtedly guilty. An assassination made up for the want of legal power to punish him. But if Rome could have preserved her liberty no longer, and must necessarily have submitted to some ambitious usurper, from the manners and principles of the people, which were the great supports of liberty, being destroyed; if the example of Sylla, and the enormous wealth and credit of some individuals must sooner or later have changed the republic into a monarchy, ought not the sovereignty of Cæsar to have been preferred before the horrors of new civil wars? The atrocious action of Brutus, who kills his friend and benefactor, in the chimerical hope of saving the state, is an instance of republican fanaticism, the excesses of which greatly resemble those of religion.

Opinion of Cicero.

Cicero, with whose timidity the conspirators were too well acquainted to intrust him with

their secret, complained that, after the deed was done, they did not put to death all the intimate friends of Cæsar. In his letter to Atticus, he said, *They have executed a childish project with the courage of heroes; the tree is felled, but the roots still subsist.* It was impossible at that time to destroy the roots of tyranny, for they were connected with the manners of the people, which were incapable of reformation. Perhaps, even among the conspirators, there might soon have been seen a new usurper. We shall find Cicero mistaken in his politics, and become the author and victim of the fortune of Augustus.

The conspirators do not succeed with the people.

Cæsar had no sooner expired than the murderers ran through the city with their daggers in their hands, exclaiming that the king of Rome was dead; they were joined by some patricians, but the people appeared struck with consternation and regret; therefore, finding themselves disappointed in their expectations, they retired to the Capitol. Mark Antony, who was consul, and Lepidus, the general of the horse, discovered a readiness to avenge the death of the dictator; that is to say, to seize the supreme power, which was the object of their ambition. The senate assembled to consider whether Cæsar should be declared a tyrant or a lawful magistrate; and his memory was on the point of being blasted, when Antony artfully observed, that, as all the offices had been filled up by the dictator, the governors and magistrates would be obliged to resign as soon as it should be declared that he, from whom their authority flowed, was an usurper and a tyrant, and that a most fatal

anarchy, distress, and civil war, would be the consequence. They left the question undecided, and agreed that the murderers of the dictator should not be prosecuted; yet at the same time they confirmed all his laws. Such an equivocal, or rather contradictory decree, passed while affairs were in such a critical situation, could not be expected to restore tranquillity. It was absolutely necessary either to show a resolute spirit, or to renounce liberty altogether. Antony, by being in possession of Cæsar's papers, forged whatever he pleased, and employed them for his own purposes.

Antony stirs up the people.

In the mean time, the different parties seemed to be willing to conciliate matters; and the conspirators, having come down from the Capitol, were received in a friendly manner by Antony and Lepidus: but a step taken by the former very soon revived the dissensions. He caused Cæsar's will to be read, in which honourable mention was made of some of the murderers, and considerable legacies left to the Roman people. The hearts of the people being penetrated with tenderness and gratitude, they were completely inflamed by the encomium which he passed upon that great man, by the recital of his actions, and by the account which he gave of his virtues. As the body was laid out for performing the funeral obsequies, he took this opportunity to display the robe dyed in blood, and to point out the wounds which had been given by the assassins. Such was the effect which his harangue made upon the people, that, in a transport of rage, they ran to set fire to the houses of the conspirators, who immediately quitted Rome. On

He deceives the senate.

purpose to gain the senate, the consul affected a great desire to restore republican government, and proposed that Sextus, the son of Pompey, who had been concealed in Spain ever since the battle of Munda, should be recalled. Even Cicero fell into the snare, and highly extolled Antony, whom we shall very soon find him tearing in pieces by the most violent invectives.

CHAPTER IX.

DARING POLICY OF OCTAVIUS. THE TRIUMVIRATE. BATTLE OF PHILIPPI, IN WHICH THE REPUBLICAN PARTY WAS DESTROYED.

Octavius adopted by Cæsar.

OCTAVIUS, so celebrated afterwards under the name of Augustus, grandson of Julia, the sister of Cæsar, made his appearance at this time, and, though but eighteen years of age, took a leading part in public affairs. He had been adopted by the dictator his great-uncle, who left him three-fourths of his fortune. He was studying eloquence at Apollonia, a maritime town in Epirus, when he received intelligence of the tragical event which totally changed the face of affairs. He was advised to dissemble, to let time work, and even to renounce his adoption and inheritance; but he had too much ambition to follow such advice; and, going immediately to Rome, declared himself the heir of Cæsar. Having observed that Antony, who was sole master, was little disposed to show

him any favour, he persisted in his purpose with steady and artful policy. The dictator's money being refused to him by the consul, he sold his patrimony, that he might discharge the legacies mentioned in the will of Cæsar; an infallible means of attaching the people to his interest, and provoking them against a man who, by injuring the son, could not fail to appear ungrateful to the memory of the father, and unjust to the public.

Quarrel of Antony and Octavius.

Antony and Octavius were frequently reconciled, but still fresh quarrels arose. The last wanted to revenge the death of Cæsar, while the other only affected to wish it, because it would be agreeable to the multitude, but at bottom his sole purpose was to aggrandize himself; and their interests being totally opposite, at last produced a civil war. The hope of their destroying one another was matter of much satisfaction to many of the senators. Cicero, less prudent than those that remained neuter, espoused the part of Octavius, and inveighed with all the power of his oratory against Antony, which brought upon him the reproach of Brutus, *that he was less anxious for the liberty of his country, than to find a good master for himself.* The personal enemy of the one, and seduced by the pretended confidence and flattery of the other, he perhaps imagined, that he was solely employed in serving his country, while he was only gratifying his own resentment and vanity. Sometimes we may so far deceive ourselves as to be ignorant of the motives of our actions, while they are plainly seen by the world.

Character of Cicero.

The picture of that celebrated orator, as drawn by Montesquieu, explains the secret of his proceedings. 'I believe,' says he, 'that if Cato had preserved his life for the service of the republic, he would have given a different turn to affairs. Cicero, with admirable talents for shining in a subordinate sphere, was not capable of taking the lead. He had a fine genius, but often wanted elevation of soul. With him virtue was but a secondary motive, as glory was with Cato. Cicero was always the first in his own eyes; Cato never thought of himself. The one would have saved the republic for its own sake, the other that he might have boasted of it.'

Such a passion for vain-glory is a proof of a weak mind, which may be led into egregious errors from mean considerations. Besides, Cicero, by extolling the young Cæsar, expected to secure support for himself. Though his eloquent philippics are suspected to have flowed from personal resentment, yet, like those of Demosthenes, they are excellent models for state orators.

Honours lavished upon Octavius.

The government of Cisalpine Gaul, which Antony secured to himself, that he might keep Italy in awe, was the occasion of the war. Decimus Brutus, one of the chief conspirators, had been appointed to that government by the dictator, and intended to maintain himself in it. Antony advanced to displace him. Octavius was likewise at the head of an army, though without a title to the command, but was pressed by his soldiers to assume that of pro-prætor, which he refused, from an affected modesty, with a view to the credit which it might

procure him with the senate. This so far succeeded, that, by the advice of Cicero, the senate not only named him pro-prætor, but likewise erected a statue to him, and permitted him to stand for the consulship, ten years before the time fixed by law. It was not the first time that Cicero had sacrificed the laws to those whose friendship he courted.

Antony had already begun to besiege Decimus in Modena; but Cicero caused him to be declared the enemy of his country, if he did not immediately raise the siege and leave Cisalpine Gaul. This decree of the senate being treated with contempt, the two consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, in conjunction with Octavius, were ordered to go and attack him. Pansa was defeated and killed. Hirtius, in gaining a battle, lost his life. Antony, being obliged to fly, escaped into Transalpine Gaul, where Lepidus had the command. Having presented himself in a mourning habit to the soldiers, they were affected with compassion, and, proclaiming him general, Lepidus was obliged to declare in his favour, that he might not be totally forsaken. Antony defeated, joins Lepidus.

After the defeat of Antony, the senate no longer showed the same complaisance for Octavius, and gave the command of the army to Decimus. The republican party having recovered courage, Octavius found it was time to throw off the mask. Cicero, still continuing to be the dupe of his artifice, attempted in vain to procure the consulship for him, in hope of being nominated his colleague; but the proposal being received with a peal of laughter by the senate, the heir of the dictator did not hesitate to copy the bold and artful policy of Cæsar, 710. Octavius forms a triumvirate with them.

and, uniting his interests with those of Antony and Lepidus, marched at the head of his army to Rome, where he forced them to choose him consul, though he was scarcely twenty years of age; and thus, by his address rather than his courage, put himself in a situation to gratify that ambition with which he was devoured.

They pursue the murderers of Cæsar.

Brutus and Cassius had withdrawn; the one into Greece, and the other into Asia, where their party was strengthened by success, and they reckoned twenty legions under their command. The first step of the young consul was to cause them to be condemned, with all who were concerned in Cæsar's murder; but as he could not expect to subdue them without assistance, he caused the decree, which had been passed against Antony and Lepidus, to be revoked. Octavius joined these two in the neighbourhood of Modena, where their conference lasted three days. They agreed to share the sovereign power among them for five years, under the appellation of triumvirs. Lepidus was to continue in Rome, while Octavius and Antony carried on the war against the conspirators; but their enemies were to be previously extirpated by a proscription, which would procure them the means of supporting their army. Thus all the horrors of the time of Sylla, which had been in some degree effaced by the clemency of Cæsar, were again renewed. Cæsar, notwithstanding his clemency, had been murdered, which was not forgotten by the triumvirs.

Dreadful proscription.

It is impossible to describe the horrors of this proscription. The tyrants began with sacrificing their friends and kindred to one an-

other. Lepidus presented the head of his brother, Antony his uncle's, and Octavius that of Cicero, by whom he had been too zealously seconded. It was forbidden, under pain of death, to conceal or assist any proscribed person. A reward was offered to whoever should kill them; and even the freedom of the city to slaves who assassinated their masters. Some heroic proofs of fidelity in women and slaves were to be met with even amidst this dreadful carnage and the treachery of the times; but villany made blood to flow in torrents over the whole country. At the sight of Cicero's head, who had been killed by a tribune whom his eloquence had formerly saved, Antony exulted with joy. Three hundred senators, and more than two thousand knights, were murdered. If no other cause of hatred presented itself, the possession of riches was a sufficient offence. Yet, after all, as the confiscations were inadequate to their wants, they imposed a tax upon the mothers, daughters, and relations of the proscribed. Here was one of those abominable scenes, where men were to be seen divested of humanity by their passions, and surpassing the fury of tigers.

Octavius and Antony march against Brutus and Cassius.

Being at last glutted with massacre and rapine, they hastened to execute their projects against the republicans. Lepidus guarded Rome, while his two colleagues entered Macedonia, where Brutus had been joined by Cassius. No Roman armies had ever been seen of equal number to those that were now to decide the fate of the republic. On each side they amounted to more than a hundred thousand men, seasoned to war, and animated with all the ardour which ambition or a love of liberty could in-

spire. Cassius wished to avoid coming to an engagement, because the enemy must have soon perished for want of provisions, but Brutus did not concur in this opinion. The soldiers exclaimed, that it was cowardly to decline the combat; they murmured and deserted, and their impatience determined their generals to engage.

711. Battle of Philippi. The battle of Philippi, which was fought on the confines of Macedonia and Thrace, destroyed the republican party. Octavius, who was as cowardly in the field as he was bold in council, concealed himself on pretence of sickness, and his legions were routed by Brutus; but, while the conqueror was too rashly pursuing the fugitives, Antony broke and dispersed the wing of the army commanded by Cassius, who, being ignorant of the success of his colleague, obliged one of his freedmen to kill him. Both armies being in one part victorious, in the other defeated, retreated to their camps. That of the triumvirs was in want of every kind of provision, which determined Brutus to pursue the plan of Cassius; and the success would have been infallible, if the mutiny of his troops had not obliged him to hazard a second engagement. After having totally defeated the wing of the army commanded by Octavius, he lost the battle, and, being persuaded that liberty was annihilated, fell upon his sword, and died the same death as his colleague.

Death of Cassius and Brutus.

Faults of these two Romans. These two generals were honoured with the title of the last of the Romans, though some have thought they might better have deserved it. Cassius, of a violent haughty temper, was suspected of being influenced less by zeal for his

country than hatred against Cæsar. Brutus, virtuous from principle, inviolably attached to the laws, just and compassionate, respecting the title of citizen even in his enemies, yielded to that enthusiasm which impedes reflection. Sometimes, from an apprehension of going too great lengths, he did not act with sufficient vigour; while at others, though but seldom, he thought that violence in support of the cause in which he was engaged might be permitted. Before the second battle of Philippi, he promised his soldiers the pillage of Sparta and Thessalonica, if they gained the victory. This, as Plutarch observes, was to imitate those who plead for the right of the strongest.

Reflections upon suicide.

Brutus and Cassius, by killing themselves at the same time, destroyed the republic, and have therefore been very properly censured for their rash despair. But ought we to ascribe suicide, which was at that time very frequent in Rome, to a want of courage? 'It is certain,' says the celebrated Montesquieu, 'that men are become less free, less courageous, less inclined to perform noble actions, than they were when, by the power which they assumed over themselves, they could at all times escape from every other power.' The Christian religion inspires its followers with a just abhorrence of suicide; and the instances of it which we meet with at present are almost all the effect of vice and irregularities, that prove how needful are the divine morals it teaches. It is no less evident, that it was not from cowardice that the Catos and the Brutuses rather sacrificed their lives than submit to lose their liberty. Subtle reasonings upon this subject can never weaken the proofs drawn from our feelings.

CHAPTER X.

THE MISCONDUCT OF ANTONY TURNED BY OCTAVIUS TO HIS OWN ADVANTAGE. THE BATTLE OF ACTIUM, AND TERMINATION OF THE REPUBLIC.

New cruelties of Octavius.

THE dastardly Octavius, for, though he commanded armies, he deserved no other appellation, continued to glut himself with blood after the battle which Antony had gained for him. A multitude of illustrious victims were butchered, and, among others, Favonius the senator, a philosopher, and the friend of Brutus, but guiltless of having dipped his hands in the blood of Cæsar. It was a maxim with him, that the most unjust tyranny is preferable to a civil war; the truth of which has been too often confirmed by experience.

Profusion to the soldiers.

As the troops engaged in the service of the tyrants solely from motives of interest and the allurement of riches, the triumvirs were obliged to give them a gratuity of five thousand drachmæ * per man, besides additional recompenses to the officers. We may easily judge to what extortions the people were exposed. Antony went into Asia on purpose to drain it of the little money which had escaped the hands of Brutus and Cassius. *Since you double our taxes*, said an orator to him, *double likewise our summers and harvests, otherwise we shall not be able*

* 40*l.* 7*s.* 3½*d.* Sterling.

to satisfy you. But what avail reasons against force?

When Antony arrived in Cilicia, he summoned before him Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, whose conduct during the war had given room for suspicion. The princess appeared, and, by her charms, captivated that great general and aspiring politician, who, lulled asleep in the lap of love, forgot every thing but her. Octavius, who thought of nothing but his own interests, and how to get the whole power into his hands, took advantage of Antony's blind passion, and, by the most skilful address, made up for his want of military talents. Antony captivated by Cleopatra.

After vanquishing, by his generals, Sextus, the son of Pompey, who, being master of Sicily and Sardinia, had given him no small uneasiness, he seized the first pretence of getting rid of Lepidus, a man entirely destitute of merit, whose rise seemed to be owing to one of those unaccountable caprices in which fortune sometimes delights. That triumvir descended to the lowest submission, begged his life, and on that condition was contented to pass his days in contempt and obscurity. Fall of Lepidus. 718.

We may form some idea of his meanness and pride by the following anecdote. Having taken it into his head to celebrate a triumph for his success in a trifling expedition, he himself, with the consent of his colleagues, drew up a proclamation, which began thus: *To all those who shall honour our triumph, health and honour; to all others, misery and proscription.*

Antony having made young Pompey prisoner in Asia, and put him to death, was the only man left who could dispute the empire with his Death of young Pompey.

colleague; but, instead of this, he paved the way for his rival's usurpation, and ruined himself by a series of the most inexcusable faults.

Antony makes himself odious.

Fulvia, widow of the seditious Clodius, at that time married to Antony, had fomented a quarrel between him and Octavius, on purpose to force him from the arms of Cleopatra. This was the cause of a slight war, in which Perusa was destroyed. Both parties being reconciled, and having made a division of all the provinces, Antony, without any reason, quitted Italy, to which he had returned. The Athenians, among whom he designed to pass the winter, received him as if he had been a deity, and offered him their tutelar goddess, Minerva, in marriage; a piece of flattery which he rewarded by exacting from them a thousand talents for her portion. On his return from an unsuccessful expedition against the Parthians, he made himself odious and contemptible by new excesses; proclaimed Cleopatra queen of Egypt, Cyprus, Africa, and Cælo-Syria; lavished provinces and kingdoms on the children he had by her; and by every action brought new disgrace upon the Roman name.

Octavius declares himself his enemy.

Octavius had the address to seize every opportunity of lessening the character of his rival, and at last accused him before the senate. A war was resolved upon, and Antony prepared for it in the midst of pleasures, surrounded by troops of buffoons. By divorcing the virtuous Octavia, his colleague's sister, whom he had married after the death of Fulvia, all hopes of accommodation were cut off, and he was abandoned by numbers of his friends, who were filled with indignation at his conduct and connexion with

Cleopatra, and still more provoked by the pride and haughtiness of that queen.

Before the two rivals had recourse to arms, they attacked each other with the bitterest invectives. At last the fate of the empire was decided by the sea-fight off Actium. Cleopatra had prevailed upon Antony to hazard an engagement at sea, though he was superior by land, and fled with her galleys in the heat of the battle. Her lover, though a man of tried valour, forgot himself on this occasion, and abandoned every thing to follow her. Thus Octavius, or rather his general, Agrippa, gained a complete victory; and Antony's land-army, which consisted of nineteen legions and twelve thousand horse, having in vain waited for the coming of their general, ranged themselves under the standard of the conqueror. This success was soon followed by the conquest of Egypt; and the ensuing year Antony laid violent hands upon himself at Alexandria. Cleopatra was reserved by Octavius to adorn his triumph, but she avoided that disgrace by a courageous death, either from the bite of an aspic, or some other poison. 722. Battle of Actium. Death of Antony and Cleopatra.

Thus did Cæsar's grand nephew, by intrigues and fawning, audaciousness and cruelty, at last gain that sovereignty to which he had aspired from his youth. In the sequel, we shall see by what methods he secured his dominion while he affected a respect for the ancient laws. Rome had now for ever lost her liberty, and that famous republic was no more; nothing remained but a vain shadow, which yet soothed the pride of her citizens. 724. Octavius sole master of the republic.

Causes of this revolution.

This revolution must be ascribed to the vices introduced by opulence. Every thing was set to sale, when every thing could be purchased by a few individuals, and their excessive riches increasing the poverty and wretchedness of the multitude, the fundamentals of the constitution gave way to corruption; integrity disappeared, self-interest was the only rule of action, and the depravity of manners infected the springs of government. The spirit of patriotism was stifled by a thousand discordant passions; luxury, voluptuousness, and debauchery, broke the bonds of duty, and ambition forced every barrier sword in hand. In a word, the weak necessarily became the slaves of the strongest. When we see the people seduced by boundless profusion, the soldiers sold to the general, who fills their purses; the magistrates forming cabals to support themselves in office; and the generals refusing to lay down the command at the legal period, we may, without hesitation, conclude that liberty is at an end.

TENTH EPOCH.

THE REPUBLIC CHANGED INTO A MILITARY MONARCHY, COMPREHENDING THE PERIOD OF THE EMPERORS.

FROM THE YEAR OF ROME SEVEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY SIX, TO THE REIGN OF CONSTANTINE.

AUGUSTUS.

CHAPTER I.

REIGN OF AUGUSTUS TILL THE DEATH OF AGRIPPA.

Idea of the reign of Augustus.

HITHERTO we have seen Augustus, the title which Octavius caused the senate to confer upon him, acting with the refined policy of an unprincipled man, who sacrifices every thing to an unbridled appetite for unjust dominion; but from this period, if he does not really change his character and maxims, we shall no more behold him imbruing his hands in human blood; he will even appear in the light of a good prince, at least so far as was necessary for his own interest. Loaded with encomiums by flatterers, hated by the friends of republican government as an oppressor, he will sometimes merit the applause of the judicious politician, by the prudent exercise of his authority.

Establishment of order after the loss of liberty.

'Augustus,' says Montesquieu, 'established order, *i. e.* servitude, on a durable foundation; for when an usurper seizes the government of a free state, he calls every thing order which tends to secure the authority in the hands of a single person; and whatever is favourable to the liberty of the subject, goes by the name of confusion, dissension, and anarchy.' But as it was impossible the Romans should have continued a free people, the order established by Augustus, when compared with the former confusion and calamities, in some measure wipes out the spots with which his memory is stained. Under his government, Rome enjoyed tranquillity, and had time to breathe. Even this was no small advantage, after the horrors of the civil wars.

725. Augustus affects an inclination to abdicate.

Having nothing more at heart than the establishment of his power, and by a feigned moderation to secure himself against the fate which had hurried Cæsar to the grave, he affected an inclination to abdicate the government, and consulted on that head his two confidents, Mæcenas and Agrippa, the first of whom, like a generous patriot, exhorted him to put so noble a design in execution; but Agrippa, like an able courtier, argued that such a step would be destructive to the public, and dangerous t himself; and Augustus preferred this opinion, which was, doubtless, conformable to his own sentiments.

He confirms his power.

However, after having repealed all the decrees of the triumvirate, and given some proofs of a wise administration, he declared that he restored the sovereign power into the hands of the senate and people. He had taken his mea-

sures with dexterity, and reckoned upon meeting with a refusal; nor was he mistaken. He was humbly entreated not to quit the reins of government, and prevailed upon to bear that burden ten years longer, reserving to himself, however, the right of abdication, if his services might be dispensed with. In all appearance, the major part of the senate penetrated his secret intentions, which the tenor of his past conduct had sufficiently discovered. But, after all, his power seemed to acquire the sanction of law from the consent and wishes of the people, and he retained it till his death, by a regular renewal of the same ceremony. A plan of policy, well concerted and steadily pursued, seldom fails of success, when address is seconded by force.

All power centered in his person.

Augustus, terrified by the tragical end of Cæsar, and careful to disguise monarchy under the garb of republican government, shared the administration of the provinces with the senate, artfully assigning to that body such as were least liable to disturbances; that is, those where no troops were kept on foot; by which means he had the whole military force in his own hands. Far from giving offence to the people by affecting the title of king, he even did not assume that of dictator, contenting himself with the name of emperor, which, in the times of the republic, was bestowed as a distinction merely honorary, without any power annexed. To this was added, as in the days of Cæsar, the command of the armies, a privilege which retains nations in subjection, and the right of making war and peace. Invested with the consular, proconsular, and tribunitial power,

though without the title of tribune; with the censorial, under the name of reformer of manners, and with the high priesthood, to which the influence of religion added great weight, he was absolute master of the state, without suffering his despotic power to become visible. To these titles was added that of father of his country. He left to the senate the ancient offices and ensigns of dignity; but weakened the power of that body even by its numbers, which he increased to a thousand; and by the care he took to admit none but such as were entirely devoted to his pleasure. He caressed and flattered the people, gave them entertainments, and procured them abundance. Their assemblies were held as usual for the election of magistrates; but he governed the comitia, disposed of the suffrages, and every thing was determined according to his will.

Liberty annihilated.

Such was the government of the Emperors. They alway exercised the power, while the people and senate retained the appearance of sovereignty. An empty parade of liberty, which was now no more! Of what importance is it to preserve some traces of freedom in the form of government, when a state is actually under the yoke of a despot? Or to seem to grant voluntarily what cannot be refused? A dispensation from the laws was granted to the emperor. Not to mention that such a privilege demonstrates the utter destruction of all legal authority, what could have hindered him from assuming it without a grant? It is amazing what power a mere name often produces over mankind. He reigned, because he did not openly pretend to regal authority. Though the government was mo-

narchical, the people fondly imagined that the republic still subsisted, because the names of senate, consul, &c. were suffered to remain. In like manner, we see that frequently the best method of destroying the influence of an opinion, is to preserve the words, and suffer the idea to be lost.

Augustus affects an appearance of virtue.

This emperor's conduct in private life, his show of modesty, his affability and beneficence, were, doubtless, attended with the greatest advantages. That versatile soul could put on every shape. By perfidy and cruelty he had laid the foundations of his fortune; and it was necessary to wipe out the remembrance of them by putting on the mask of virtue. He even expressed a veneration for the character of Brutus. Once hearing Cato censured for his inflexible obstinacy, he replied, *Whoever supports the established government, is a good citizen and a man of honour.* This apology of Cato increased his own popularity. The historian, Titus Livius, bestowed the highest praises on Pompey, without losing the friendship of Augustus, who often rallied him as being a partisan of that hero; but avoided every appearance of censuring encomiums conformable to republican sentiments.

His reign furnishes few events.

This long reign furnishes but few events worthy of notice, as the empire enjoyed tranquillity; and, besides, we have no unexceptionable historians of those times extant; for Suetonius and Dion Cassius are not of that description. The defeat of the Cantabrians and Asturians, put a final end to all disturbances in Spain. Candacé, queen of Ethiopia, who had invaded Egypt, was defeated, and, though she afterwards

retrieved her losses, concluded a peace. The Roman valour, whetted by the civil wars, would have triumphed over more formidable enemies, had the emperor been of a martial disposition; but it was of more importance for him to keep a watchful eye over Rome, and lull its inhabitants asleep in the soft lap of peace.

732. Marries his daughter to Agrippa.

His nephew, Marcellus, to whom he had given his daughter in marriage, and destined the succession of the empire, a prince of great hopes, was cut off in the flower of his youth, to the unspeakable regret of the Romans. Agrippa was at a distance from court, having been appointed governor of Syria, in order to remove him from Rome, where his presence had given Marcellus no little uneasiness. Augustus finding his assistance necessary to put a stop to the conspiracies that were then forming, he was recalled, and married to Julia, the widow of Marcellus. If we may credit the historians, the emperor was determined to this step by Mæcenas, who frankly told him, *You have raised Agrippa so high, that you must either put him to death, or make him your son-in-law.* And Agrippa, without difficulty, consented to divorce the niece, that he might espouse the daughter of Augustus.

Visits Asia.

The emperor having put into his hands the government of Rome, set out to visit the provinces of Asia, where he had the honour of recovering, without a war, the standards which had belonged to the legions of Crassus. Phraates, king of Parthia, dreading the power of the empire, sent back those monuments of a shameful defeat, and restored the surviving prison-

ers who had been taken when Antony was routed; an event which was celebrated as a glorious triumph. The whole power of the Roman empire vested in a single man, might then very justly make its stoutest enemies tremble; but even in its greatness were concealed the seeds of inevitable ruin.

Servility of the senate.

Augustus, at his return, received new marks of submission from the senate and people. He refused the consulship, which he had already borne eleven times. And, instead of a vain title, was invested with the consular power during life, with the precedence of those who were nominally appointed to that dignity. The senators even carried their meanness so far as to offer to swear that they would observe every law which he should enact; but this abject oath was rejected. *If the laws are good*, said he, *they will certainly be observed; if they are bad, such an obligation will only be productive of mischief.* He was sensible, that the legislative authority, when united with the military power, was sufficient to effect every purpose.

Laws for the suppression of vice ill observed.

However, divers laws, which he enacted about that time, against celibacy, adultery, divorce, without sufficient cause, and the luxury of the table, raised murmurs among the people, and produced few good effects, either because he did not enforce the execution of them with sufficient vigour, or the universal depravation of manners served as a pretext to treat them with neglect. But what laws can stem the torrent of vice? By gratifying the taste of the people, who now were fully satisfied with bread and public shows; by continually entertaining them with games, and making distributions of corn,

Augustus showed himself much less zealous for correcting the manners of his subjects, than securing his personal interest; indeed, these were the most proper methods to destroy all remembrance of the ancient liberty, and prevent the present state of servitude from being felt.

The people corrupted.

The whole attention of that people, who had formerly shown such ardour for managing affairs of state, was now turned upon Pylades and Bathyllus, two celebrated actors. The former had been ordered to quit the city for his insolence, and being recalled in order to gratify the Romans, who deeply regretted his absence, he said to the emperor, *Think yourself happy, O Cæsar, that the people turn their thoughts solely upon Bathyllus and me.* The expression was significant, and must have been fully understood by so profound a politician.

Reformation of the senate followed by cabals.

It affords matter for surprise, that Augustus, after having taken so many steps to debase the senate, should have attempted to restore it to its primitive lustre. The sole method for effecting this, was a diminution of its numbers, and the exclusion of all whose birth or conduct made them unworthy of that rank. Accordingly, the number of senators was reduced from a thousand to six hundred; and the selection was made with a considerable degree of moderation and equity. But as the least deserving are commonly the most jealous of honours, this reformation gave birth to cabals. The emperor so much dreaded an assassination, that he never appeared in public without a coat of mail under his robe; and, not content with this, provided himself a farther security, by associating in the tribunitial power,

and naming for his successor, Agrippa, who was the object of universal esteem for his heroic qualities. However, as he still gave marks of apprehension, the senators proposed to watch him by turns; but Labeo, an eminent lawyer, of republican principles, broke off their deliberations, by saying pleasantly, *I am apt to fall asleep; do not reckon upon me.* Some malecontents were punished with death. It is not known whether they were guilty, or executed only on suspicion. One thing certain is, that the emperor was no rigid observer of justice.

Bold saying of Labeo.

A military government, where the sword supplies the place of fundamental laws, was the more obnoxious to conspiracies and insurrections, as, notwithstanding the corruption of the Roman manners, their martial disposition had still been kept up by the civil wars, and the sentiments of liberty yet survived in some generous minds. If Augustus escaped all dangers, it was no less owing to his address than to his power. We shall see how fatal despotism was to the generality of his successors.

Dangers of a military government.

CHAPTER II.

WARS IN GERMANY. END OF THE REIGN OF AUGUSTUS. LAWS AND LITERATURE.

742. Death of Agrippa.

THE empire suffered an irreparable loss in the death of Agrippa, which happened soon after his return from an expedition into Pannonia. Caius and Lucius, his two sons by Julia, had

been already adopted by Augustus, but their extreme youth made them incapable of assisting him in the government; he was therefore obliged, though against his will, to cast his eyes on Tiberius, son of his wife Livia and Tiberius Nero. Desirous of placing him near the throne, he obliged him to divorce a wife whom he loved, and marry Julia, whose gallantries were become public. Ambition extinguished every sentiment of honour in the breast of Tiberius; he therefore obeyed with an air of satisfaction.

War in Germany. Success of Tiberius.

The empire was disturbed by the Germans, a free and warlike people, and even virtuous, as far as virtue can be practised by barbarians. From the time of the irruption of the Cimbri, they had formed a design to pass the Rhine, and procure settlements in a milder climate.

This country, whose soil has been fertilized, and even its climate changed by dint of industry, was then covered with uninhabitable forests. Augustus passed three years in Gaul to guard that province, where he left Drusus, the younger brother of Tiberius. That general entered Germany by the sea-coast, and, after four glorious campaigns, was stopped in the career of victory by an untimely death, at the age of thirty-one. He was an able commander, and a real friend to his country. Tiberius, who had lately signalized himself against the Pannonians, Daci, and Dalmatians, was sent into Germany, and drove back the barbarians. The Roman dominion seemed to gather permanent strength, and extend itself into the heart of the country; but the unconquerable Germans only waited a proper opportunity for renewing the war.

For these successes, a triumph was decreed to Augustus, to whom alone, as captain-general of the armies, belonged an honour which had raised the emulation of so many commanders. However, he refused it; one part of his politics being to avoid every appearance of state, as he was sensible that the more he concealed his absolute authority, the more firmly he secured it. At this time, the temple of Janus was shut, an event which had happened only twice before since the building of Rome. The empire enjoyed a twelve years peace, which, to the shame of human nature, is an uncommon circumstance.

Augustus refuses a triumph.

Among the new regulations made by Augustus, there is one which marks his suspicious temper. There was a law which prohibited putting slaves to the torture in order to procure from them evidence against their masters. This the emperor dared not abolish; and, at the same time, dreading that it might affect his own safety, he eluded it by an odious evasion; publishing an ordinance that, in cases of treason, the slaves of the person accused might be sold to the prince or to the state, and then their evidence should be valid. This was evidently affronting legislation by the legislative power itself, and showing that every thing was to be regulated by the interests of a single person.

Unpopular regulation of Augustus.

Dion Cassius gives a striking instance of that selfish policy by which the emperor was uniformly guided. Licinius, his freedman, and one of those who enjoyed his confidence, an artful and unfeeling financier, oppressed Gaul by his extortions. As the taxes were paid every

An extortioner approved by the emperor.

month, and the names of Quintilis and Sextilis had lately been changed to July and August, he reckoned them as four, by their old and new names, and thus doubled the imposts. Bitter complaints were made to the emperor, and he was on the point of being punished; but displaying his coffers, 'Tis for you,' cried he, 'that I have amassed this treasure: the Gauls might have employed their riches against you, accept the money.' Upon this, the extortioner appeared a man of honour. Several of Augustus's actions wear an imposing air of virtue; but the more we examine his character, the more hypocritical it appears.

Death of Mæcenas.

Though he was principally indebted to Mæcenas for the high reputation he enjoyed, he debauched the wife of that friend and faithful minister, which occasioned a coolness between them. Mæcenas was an epicurean, of an indolent temper, an able politician, and had sometimes resolution enough to tell his master disagreeable truths. One day, when Augustus was on the point of indulging his sanguinary temper by the condemnation of some persons who had been brought before him, that minister, not being able to come near him in the crowd, wrote on a billet, *Butcher, come down from the tribunal;* on reading which, the emperor quitted the court without passing sentence. It was probably owing to his advice that the emperor acted with so much moderation after the ruin of the triumvirate; and the favours he lavished upon men of letters produced the encomiums they bestowed upon his master, who was sincerely grieved for a loss so difficult to be retrieved.

At the height of fortune and power, in the midst of those divine honours which were servilely paid him, Augustus at last found that it was possible to be miserable. His own family proved an inexhaustible source of mortification. His daughter Julia, to whose excesses no person was a stranger except her father, at last prostituted herself so openly, that he thought it necessary to inform the senate of her behaviour, and condemn her to banishment. His grand-daughter of the same name imitated her mother, and was subjected to the like punishment. Caius and Julius, his adopted sons, the objects of his affection and his hopes, whose education he inspected himself, did not answer his care; and both died at a distance from him, the one in Asia and the other at Marseilles.

Augustus unhappy in his family.

His son-in-law Tiberius had retired to Rhodes, perhaps from disgust at his predilection in their favour, or resentment for the infamous conduct of Julia, and staid there seven years in a kind of banishment. Though Augustus was too well acquainted with his disposition to entertain the least friendship for him, yet the death of the Cæsars made his adoption necessary, and he was named to the succession by the emperor, who detested him. What numerous afflictions under the appearance of consummate happiness!

Retreat of Tiberius. His adoption.

The conspiracy formed against him by Cinna, grandson of Pompey, was a new stroke which pierced him to the soul. When he received the first information of it, he continued several days in a state of suspense between the desire of revenge and the fear of making himself odious

Conspiracy of Cinna.

by new severities. At last the prudent advice of Livia inclined him to the merciful side. He, therefore, sent for Cinna; and, after a severe reprimand for his treachery, named him to the consulship. By which step the conspirator was converted into a zealous friend. Whether this was the effect of clemency or politics is of no importance. It was an action worthy of being celebrated by a Corneille.

The soldiers increase their emoluments.

The Germans and other barbarous nations having renewed the war, the soldiers, who now fought only from motives of interest, murmured at the hardships of the service, in order to increase their emoluments. The distribution of lands among the veterans, which had been very common ever since the days of Sylla, had been wisely suppressed as destructive of the public tranquillity, and they had received a certain sum of money as a gratification. This Augustus promised to increase to twenty thousand sesterces a man, after sixteen years service in the prætorian bands, and twelve thousand to each legionary soldier who had served twenty years. The great sesterce, or thousand sesterces, was worth about 8*l.* 1s. 5½d. English, consequently every soldier in the prætorian bands received about 161*l.* 9s. 2d.

Prodigious expenses for the troops.

The prætorian bands, consisting of ten cohorts, of a thousand each, were the emperor's guards, besides which there were twenty-three or twenty-five legions * kept constantly on foot, without reckoning nearly an equal number of auxiliaries and the two fleets. The pay of the

* In the time of Polybius, the legion ordinarily consisted of 4200 foot and 300 horse; it was afterwards augmented to 5000 and 6000 men.

Roman soldiers was considerably higher than ours, and therefore the expense must have been prodigious; but, in order to support an usurped power, every thing must be sacrificed to the military. Augustus instituted a fund for the pay and recompenses bestowed on the soldiers, and was the first to contribute, as if the whole public money had not been at his disposal. At last he imposed a tax for its maintenance, and the people found themselves obliged to pay those who kept them in slavery.

We shall here observe, that the Christian vulgar era begins in the year of Rome 753, which, according to the ancient opinion, was the epoch of the birth of Christ. The modern chronologists place it four years earlier, but, notwithstanding, conform to the vulgar era, by which we shall in the sequel regulate our dates. This is no place to speak of the Christian religion, which continued long in obscurity before it enlightened the nations.

Revolt of the barbarians.

Tiberius, with his nephew Germanicus, son of the celebrated Drusus, subdued the Pannonians and Dalmatians, who, by their revolt, had filled Rome with apprehensions. One of their chiefs, named Bato, being interrogated by Tiberius on the motives that induced them to rebel, boldly replied, *Because, instead of shepherds to protect, you sent wolves to devour us.*

Year of CHRIST 9. Varus defeated by the Germans.

During the rejoicings occasioned by this victory, they received the dismal news of Varus being surprised by the Germans. He commanded the armies in Germany, where his careless security was equalled only by his avarice. Arminius, a native of that country, who, though promoted to the rank of a Roman knight, still

continued a zealous patriot, had excited them to arms, and led them on to the battle. In this engagement three legions were cut in pieces, and the general killed himself in despair. Upon the first news of the disaster, Augustus abandoned himself to the most pusillanimous sorrow, and acted in a manner capable of filling the minds of the people with consternation, whose spirits it is of the last importance to keep up. It is said that he struck his head against the walls, exclaiming, *Varus, restore my legions!*

Tiberius gains great honour in Germany.

When recovered from his fright, he sent Tiberius against the enemy, and in two campaigns the appearance of tranquillity was restored. That general gained no little honour by his vigilance, his care to keep up an exact discipline, and a conduct as remarkable for its prudence as that of his predecessor had been for its blindness. Though he performed no shining exploit, he doubtless fully answered the views of Augustus, being, at his return, admitted to a share of the imperial dignity. Eight legions were stationed to guard the Rhine under the command of Germanicus, whom we shall have occasion to mention in the sequel, and whose uncommon merit will make his death regretted by the reader.

Despotism of Augustus.

The activity of the emperor's genius, as well as his passion for command, continued unabated by old age. He never failed to cause his power to be continued when its stated period drew near, and affected to hold of the republic an authority destructive of its very essence. He caused a law to be passed, making the ordinances of his privy council equally binding with the de-

crees of the senate; and one year filled all the offices with persons of his own nomination, under pretence of riots having been committed at the elections. In a word, every thing depended upon him. The law which made the writing of defamatory libels high treason, proves that his severity increased with his old age; and it became an instrument of tyranny in the hands of his successors.

Law against celibacy ill observed.

The law promulgated by him against celibacy was so ill observed, that the generality of the knights lived in that state in order to indulge their debauchery; and loudly murmured at the yoke which the government attempted to impose upon them. Then appeared a new law, called the *Lex Papia Poppæa*, from the names of the consuls, inflicting severer penalties than the former. By it, all who lived in celibacy were declared incapable of inheriting from their collaterals, and wills in their favour annulled; these successions and bequests being confiscated to the public treasury. It is remarkable, that both the consuls, under whose administration it was passed, were obnoxious to these penalties.

It is no difficult matter to observe, that the universal corruption of manners defeated the views of the legislator. The sacred ties of marriage, so pleasing and so estimable in the eyes of virtue, are regarded by vice as galling fetters. In vain are laws made, when the manners of the age render them almost of no effect.

Combats with the gladiators.

Augustus had forbidden the knights to combat in the arena with the gladiators; for that disgraceful madness had infected men of the highest rank. But he found so many obstacles

raised against a prohibition, the necessity of which appears to us incredible, that he was obliged to take it off. After which, senators, and even women, dishonoured themselves by engaging in combats, as disgraceful as barbarous and detestable; but the Roman manners always present us with something shocking to humanity.

14. Death of Augustus. Character of his reign.

After a reign of about forty-four years, Augustus ended his life at the age of seventy-six, with more courage than he had ever shown in an engagement. Perceiving himself near his end, he turned to his confidents, and said, Have I not acted my part well? the play is at an end; give me your applause. In fact, he has been equalled by few actors in the great theatre of ambition and politics. It was principally by his talent for deceiving mankind that he rose to his unrivalled height of power. But, while we detest his hypocrisy and the atrocious actions which render his triumvirate an object of execration, it must be acknowledged, that Rome, being under a necessity of submitting to a master, was happy in being governed by him rather than another. He extinguished the flame of civil wars, restored plenty with peace, revived agriculture, enacted salutary laws against disorders of every kind, and, in a word, governed more like a wise king than a tyrant.

One of his maxims was, that a war ought never to be undertaken, nor a battle ventured, without a great deal to hope, and little to fear. He compared the contrary conduct to fishing with golden hooks; the loss of one of which might ruin the fisherman. The flattering encomiums he received from orators and poets

only prove that he encouraged learning, and rewarded genius. The Virgils and Horaces, loaded with his favours, lavished upon him the incense, ought I to say, of gratitude or adulation? To them he is principally indebted for his fame; and it was unquestionably good policy to favour men so capable of charming their cotemporaries, and gaining the suffrages of all ages.

Taste formed before his time.

We should be grossly mistaken did we give Augustus the honour of introducing that good taste which then universally prevailed. Lucretius, Cicero, Sallust, Cæsar, &c. flourished before him. The career was open. The Romans had been taught by the Greeks to imitate and embellish nature; taste was formed, and the light of knowledge diffused. Comedy, Eloquence, History, and Philosophy, had produced their masterpieces. Nothing more was wanting than to dispute the palm with Homer and Pindar, which was done with success by the two poets, friends of Augustus and Mæcenas. Ovid, notwithstanding his faulty indulgence in brilliant thoughts, holds a distinguished rank among the authors of that age; but his ill conduct brought him into disgrace, and he died in exile.

TIBERIUS.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF TIBERIUS TILL THE DEATH OF GERMANICUS AND PISO.

14. Tiberius ascends the throne.

It was said that Augustus made choice of Tiberius for his successor, that he might increase his own glory by the contrast. But this suspicion is not supported by the least degree of probability, and seems to be the offspring of human malignity, which delights to paint in odious colours the intentions as well as the vices of the great. However, the government of Tiberius was, in fact, a detestable tyranny, and well calculated for giving new lustre to the memory of Augustus.

His character.

This prince, who was descended from the ancient family of the Claudii, and about the age of fifty-five, to a great genius, capacity, and experience, joined all the vices of a gloomy, suspicious, cruel, and treacherous soul. He concealed his thoughts under the mask of an impenetrable dissimulation, which only served to render them more dangerous; and the first steps he took showed him to be a tyrant equally void of honour and humanity. Augustus had adopted one of Agrippa's sons, whom he afterwards banished, because he found his disposi-

tion incorrigibly and ferociously vicious. Young Agrippa was still alive in his place of exile, where Tiberius, whose jealousy could not bear the most distant apprehension of a rival, caused him to be assassinated, and then threatened the murderer, who had executed his orders, with a criminal prosecution. Thus we see him in his first actions giving a loose to his villany, and concealing it under the veil of hypocrisy.

The senate entreat him to accept the sovereignty.

After this beginning, though he already acted as sovereign, and had taken upon him the command of the army, he affected in the senate to refuse the acceptance of a power which he was actually exercising as the heir of Augustus; exaggerated the uneasiness with which it was attended; represented that it was too heavy a burden for one man, and therefore ought to be divided among many; and that certainly among so many illustrious personages some might be found capable of supporting its weight. The senators pretended ignorance of his real thoughts, prostrated themselves at his feet, and conjured him not to abandon the republic. He at last seemed to yield, though with reluctance, to the entreaties of the senate, and consented to accept of the empire till it should be thought proper to relieve his old age from the cares of government.

His affected modesty.

By this ridiculous farce, Tiberius, doubtless, intended to impose upon the people, and artfully to sound the thoughts of the senators; and some of them, who, either through indignation or impatience, had expressed themselves with freedom, soon felt the weight of his resentment; but by far the greater part had studied their looks and gestures so carefully,

as to escape suspicion; and showed themselves well qualified for being slaves to a suspicious and unfeeling tyrant. Through an affectation of modesty, though in fact, from a fear of his own grandeur suffering any diminution, he opposed the excessive honours proposed to be conferred on his mother Livia, the widow of Augustus, and to whose credit, during the late reign, he was indebted for his first rise. He likewise rejected the titles of *Lord* and *Master*, which were offered him in quality of emperor. *I am master of my slaves*, said he, *I am general of my soldiers, and chief of the people.*

Governs at first with moderation.

His conduct was at first conformable to this language. He showed an extraordinary deference for the senate, consulted it on all occasions, and even extended its power by transferring to it the right of election, which hitherto had, at least in appearance, been exercised by the people. He honoured the consuls, respected the laws and manners, caused justice to be strictly administered, and lightened the burdens of the provinces, saying, that *a good shepherd ought to shear, not flay his sheep.* He even bore with patience some strokes of calumny and satire; because, said he, *in a free state, mens thoughts and tongues ought to be free.* This moderation, unquestionably flowed from his dread of being supplanted by Germanicus, who was signalizing himself in Germany; but the tyrant threw off the mask when he thought that he might safely give the reins to his passions.

Sedition of the army in Pannonia.

Two seditions in the army filled him with uneasiness. The first happened in Pannonia, where three legions were stationed under the command of Blæsus. These troops being in-

dulged in a few days repose, began to reflect on the hardships of their condition; and from murmurs proceeded to form cabals. They loudly demanded an augmentation of their pay; that the time of service should be limited to ten years, and their gratuity paid at their discharge. Tiberius thought the danger so great, that he sent his own son Drusus to the camp. But that young prince, perhaps, would have met with insuperable obstacles, had not the superstition of the soldiers been awakened by an eclipse of the moon, accompanied by dreadful storms, which terrified them into submission. Some were punished with death, and the rest returned to their duty.

Another sedition in Germany.

In Germany, the same causes produced the same effects, only with this difference, that the mutiny of a numerous army might have been attended with much worse consequences than that of three legions; and its general, Germanicus, who was idolized by the soldiers, might take advantage of that opportunity to raise himself to the imperial dignity. He had been adopted, but with reluctance, by Tiberius, who looked with a jealous eye on his merit, his reputation, and the affection borne him by all ranks. But the loyalty of Germanicus was not in the least tainted by these considerations. His presence had been required in Gaul for the service of the emperor, and there he received the news of the mutiny among the troops. Their hope was to see him soon at their head, contending for the throne he so well deserved, against its present possessor, whom they regarded only as a tyrant. But, with Germanicus, a sense of duty outweighed

Germanicus appeases the mutiny.

all the allurements of fortune. On the first news of the tumult, he hastened to appease it; but the ferment was too strong to be allayed, either by his reproaches or entreaties. At last he endeavoured to stab himself in their presence, but his arm was held by his friends, when one of the mutineers coming up, presented his sword, crying out, *This is better than your own.* However, notwithstanding this excess of rage, by a prudent mixture of firmness and temper, he found means to quell the sedition. The fury of the soldiers gave way to sober reflection; and after having, with their own hands, massacred their ringleaders, they demanded leave, as an expiation of their crime, to march against the enemy, whom they attacked and cut in pieces. The barbarians were struck with such terror by a great victory gained over Arminius, that Germanicus flattered himself with making a complete conquest of them in a short time, when Tiberius, who, with unceasing care, dissembled the suspicion to which he was every moment a prey, recalled him to Rome, under pretence of granting him time to repose, after the fatigues of war, and advancing him to new honours.

16. He defeats Arminius.

Though the emperor was a perfect master of dissimulation, he inadvertently showed, from time to time, some marks of cruelty, which gave a dreadful prospect of what was to follow. The legacy which Augustus had bequeathed to the people, not being immediately paid, a buffoon seeing a funeral procession pass by, came up to the deceased, and bid him acquaint Augustus that his will was not executed. Tiberius being informed of this sally,

Tiberius begins to show his cruelty

sent for the man, paid him his share of the legacy, and immediately caused him to be put to death, saying, *Go, tell my father that I am executing his will.* The moderation he had shown with regard to those who censured his conduct, was not of long continuance. In a short time, not only writings but words were made high treason; and thus the villany of informers was furnished with arms for the destruction of men of worth.

Two persons being accused on the most frivolous pretences of sacrilegiously profaning the worship of Augustus; the emperor very prudently stopped the prosecution, observing, that the *punishment of crimes committed against the gods ought to be left to themselves.* But he showed an incomprehensible mixture of excellent maxims and cruelty, instances of justice and acts of tyranny. If we were to draw a picture of his life, we might say that he knew what was good, and often commanded it; but the general tenor of his conduct was to do evil with cool deliberate malevolence.

Accusation of sacrilege.

Germanicus, on his return, was honoured with a splendid triumph. But the more marks of respect and affection he received from the people, the more was the secret enmity of the emperor inflamed against him; who, in order to remove so hateful an object, and work his destruction, conferred on him the command of the army in Asia, in several provinces of which troubles had broken out, and the fidelity of the legions was not suspected. At the same time, the government of Syria was conferred upon Piso, a man of violent and haughty temper, and a fit agent for the commission of the blackest crimes.

Germanicus sent into Asia.

Piso governor of Syria.

Earthquake. Twelve of the principal cities in Asia were destroyed this year by an earthquake. These natural calamities seemed presages of more dreadful evils. At least it may be said, that the first only destroyed a number of lives in a particular country; but the others, originating from the malignant disposition of the sovereign, and the vices of the subjects, necessarily inflicted a deep wound in the body of the empire.

18. Success of Germanicus. His death. In the East, Germanicus did every thing that could be expected from a prince of his amiable temper, undaunted resolution, and superior genius. He restored universal tranquillity, gave a king to Armenia, which was torn by civil dissentions, reduced Comagena and Cappadocia into Roman provinces, and gained all hearts by the manner in which he executed his commission. But on his arrival in Syria, he found Piso as haughty and untractable as foreign nations had been submissive. That governor thwarted his views, slighted his orders, and every moment gave him new reason to complain. He even carried his excesses to such a length, that Germanicus commanded him to quit the province. Soon after which, that prince was seized with a dangerous distemper at Antioch, where he died, with his last breath conjuring his friends to revenge his death upon Piso, by whom he believed that he had been poisoned.

Piso accused at Rome. Romans and Asiatics all joined in showing the most frantic marks of despair. All acted as if they had lost their father, their only hope. Piso endeavoured to repossess his government; but another having been elected by the prince's

lieutenants and the senators, he was expelled, and obliged to return to Italy, where he waited the arrival of his accusers. Tiberius was desirous of parrying this stroke. The death of Germanicus, whether natural or violent, certainly filled him with joy in the midst of the general grief which he pretended to share. As he could not stop the course of justice, he referred the cognizance of the affair to the senate; but made them understand, that he disapproved the excessive heat with which the prosecution was carried on.

His trial and death.

The charge consisted of several articles. The unbridled licentiousness in which he indulged the army in order to form a party; his ill treatment of men of worth, particularly the friends of Germanicus; poison and sorcery employed against the life of that prince. Piso made but a lame defence against every article, except the last, which he clearly refuted. Perceiving that Tiberius gave no tokens of interesting himself in his cause, nor showed any signs of pity, he left the court in despair; and having written a letter, in which he recommended his children to the emperor, was next morning found dead in his chamber.

Tiberius suspected on that account.

Some believed that Tiberius had caused him to be assassinated, lest, in his own justification, he should produce the secret orders he had received against Germanicus. Every thing is confined to suspicions and conjectures; 'So ambiguous,' says Tacitus, 'are the accounts of important transactions, some adopting every common report, while others purposely disguise the truth, and these contradictions being handed down from one generation to another.'

A maxim principally applicable to court affairs, which are wrapt in mysterious darkness, and susceptible of every misrepresentation from the spirit of party.

CHAPTER II.

THE GOVERNMENT OF TIBERIUS, TILL THE CONSPIRACY OF SEJANUS.

THE emperor's gloomy character, equivocal language, refined dissimulation, and that solitude, in which he began to fly from the sight of mankind, filled all hearts with the horrors of suspense, dread, and mistrust. The public gave the preference to the dissipated and luxurious life of his son Drusus, who was then consul. *Let him pass his days at the public shows*, said they, *and his nights at the table, rather than give himself up to cheerless solitude, gloomy watchfulness, and murderous suspicions.*

Abuse of informations.

The enormous abuse of informations struck the Romans with consternation. A word, an innocent piece of mirth, a nothing, was wrested to an ill meaning, and converted into treason. An old prætor narrowly escaped an accusation of this sort, because, being pressed by a natural occasion, he forgot to take off his ring, on which was a head of the emperor. Drusus having been seized with a severe fit of illness, a Roman knight, who thought his end approaching, wrote an elegy in his praise, and had the imprudence to read it in a public company;

upon which an information was lodged against him before the senate, and he was condemned and executed.

Tiberius gave no tokens of disapproving this infamous sentence; he only complained that they had not waited his orders; and caused a regulation to be made, that an interval of ten days should pass between the condemnation of a criminal by the senate, and his execution. Not that he intended to mitigate their sentence, but that, during his absence, he might be previously informed of all their decisions.

A revolt in Gaul.

The Romans, groaning under the weight of tyranny, received with pleasure an account of the revolt of the Gauls, from which they hoped to gain a change of masters. Unhappily they were deceived in their expectations; and both they and the Gauls were still doomed to oppression. But what are we to think of a government, where the subjects rejoiced at the news of a revolt?

Tiberius refuses to make laws against luxury.

However, Tiberius, by an artful policy, always avoided what might have increased the general odium, without procuring him any advantage. He was often pressed to check the excess of luxury, which had grown to an incredible height, especially in the table. A scarce fish, of four pounds and a half, was sold for five thousand sesterces. * Immense sums were paid for a good cook, or a delicate dish; and men outvied one another in dissipating their fortunes by the most extravagant caprices.

Though the emperor loved frugality, and set an example of it in his own conduct, he

* L.40. 7s. 3½d. English money.

would not hazard his authority by a fruitless multiplication of ordinances and penalties; being persuaded, according to Tacitus, that it is better for a prince to wink at vices which are too firmly rooted, than to show that he has not power to reform them. He observed, that the last sumptuary laws, from which great benefits were expected, had increased, instead of checking or extirpating luxury; 'for,' added he, 'if men desire what is yet tolerated, they are in some measure restrained by the dread of a future prohibition; but when that has once been made, and is violated with impunity, they are no longer withheld by fear, shame, or any other tie.'

Method of banishing luxury.

In this Tiberius judged rightly; for to make laws which, though wise in themselves, are impossible in execution, is introducing the greatest evil that can befall a state; a contempt of the legislative authority. But, in a state where an extreme inequality of fortune engenders every vice, how is it possible to check the follies of opulence? If you limit the expenses of the rich, who throw away that gold which they cannot use, they will hoard it up, circulation will be stopped, and the misery of the poor increased. A much more proper method for the banishment of luxury, would be to relieve the poor from taxes, and throw the burden of them on those who are nauseated with their superfluity. But to execute such a scheme would require an uncommon degree of prudence as well as vigour.

Asylums in Greece kept up.

The abuses of superstition are sometimes no less dangerous, and always as difficult to be reformed as those of opulence. Complaints were

made of the prodigious number of asylums in Greece, where fugitive slaves, fraudulent debtors, and malefactors of every species, found a secure retreat, to the great damage of the public. 'No power,' says Tacitus, 'was capable of restraining the people from sedition, who made it a religious duty to protect criminals.' That affair was debated in the senate, where the deputies of several Greek cities appeared in defence of what they regarded as privileges, though common sense ought to have made them be looked upon as public nuisances. Whether the senate was influenced by prejudice, or afraid of irritating a superstitious people, the asylums were kept up, though they were put under several important regulations.

22. Servility and meanness of the senate.

The emperor had for some time retired into Campania, where he indulged himself in the gloom of solitude, without losing any portion of his restless activity; but his mother being seized with a distemper, he was obliged to return to Rome, where he found the senate more cringing, more mean than ever: he even gave manifest signs of disgust at their low adulation; and, on his quitting the house, is said to have exclaimed, *O servile race, who hug your chains!*

Tacitus relates some facts highly characteristic of those slaves of tyranny. An information having been lodged against Ennius, a Roman knight, for having caused some plate to be made of a silver statue of the emperor, the Prince threw out so absurd an indictment. Capito, a celebrated lawyer, and still more remarkable for his low adulation, in order to pay his court,

complained of this lenity, as if the moderation of the sovereign had winked at a crime against the state.

A father accused by his son.

Mean while, informations being encouraged by rewards, multiplied every day. An instance of this kind appeared, which may be looked upon as a monster in the moral world; a son accusing his father, who appeared in court loaded with chains, and overwhelmed with sorrow, while the other pleaded against him with an air of gaiety and confidence! The unhappy father was exiled; and some of the judges even gave their opinion for putting him to death, because he was hated by Tiberius: for of what are not men capable, when they have no rule of action but their own interest and the passions of another? They would, without remorse, sacrifice their own fathers.

Prosecution of Cremutius Cordus.

Cremutius Cordus, an impartial historian, had bestowed encomiums upon Brutus, and called Cassius *the last of the Romans;* besides which, he had let fall some expressions reflecting on the dreadful Sejanus, then at his height of power; it was therefore impossible he should escape with impunity. An accusation was brought against him, and he saw clearly that he was undone; but his courage did not forsake him. 'My actions are blameless,' said he to the senate, and therefore my words are made use of to work my ruin. All historians have mentioned Brutus and Cassius with honour. Several satirical pieces against Augustus and Julius Cæsar are still extant. Those great men bore them with patience, and by this conduct perhaps showed as much prudence as moderation; for libels fall into obli-

vion when they are disregarded; but the world thinks that the satire is just when it provokes resentment. It has in all times been allowed to speak well of the dead, who are no longer objects of favour nor hatred. Posterity will do justice to every man, and, if I am condemned, will not only remember Brutus and Cassius, but me.'

He then left the senate, fully resolved to deliver himself from his persecutors by a voluntary death. This was the only method to disappoint the avarice of the informers, who could not seize upon the spoils of the accused till after condemnation; and, notwithstanding all their endeavours, he put his design in execution. His books were ordered by the senate to be burnt; but they were soon after republished, and bought up with the greatest avidity. Tacitus, when speaking of Cremutius and his works, observes, that severities exercised against men of genius only increase their credit; and that all who treated them with rigour have dishonoured themselves, and heightened the reputation of the writers. His death. His books burnt.

Rome now became unsupportable to the emperor, because it was too public a place for the free indulgence of his vices; and he was equally disgusted by freedom, of which, however, there scarce remained the slightest traces, and the servile adulation which prostrated itself at his feet. Besides, he could not bear the haughty behaviour of his mother Livia, to whom he was indebted for the empire, a benefit, the remembrance of which was no small mortification to his vanity. At last he quitted the city, never to return, taking with him only one sena- 26. The emperor retires to Capreæ.

tor, some knights, and a few Greek literati, with whose conversation he was amused. He gave strict orders that no person should come to disturb his quiet; and not finding in Campania a solitude where he could be entirely inaccessible, he fixed his residence in the Isle of Capræa, which he rendered famous by his cruelties and debaucheries. There, removed from the view of mankind, and the cares of business, he endeavoured to keep up his spirits in old age, by the most infamous vices.

Accidental calamities.

The fall of an ampitheatre at Fidenæ, by which fifty thousand persons were killed or hurt, and a fire at Rome, which consumed a whole quarter of the city, are but trifling events, scarce deserving a place in history, when compared with the dreadful mischiefs produced by a malevolent heart, joined to absolute power.

CHAPTER III.

CONSPIRACY OF SEJANUS. END OF THE REIGN OF TIBERIUS.

Sejanus aspires to the sovereign power.

SEJANUS, a minister equally inhuman with his master, had acquired an incredible influence over that suspicious temper, to which every thing gave umbrage. From the rank of plain knight, he had mounted by his intrigues to the highest pitch of fortune; and this rise made him extend his views even to the throne. We shall give a continued narration of the steps

taken by his ambitious policy: For it is but of little importance to follow dates, if we obtain a clear idea of the characters of men, and the chain of events.

Forms the prætorian guards into an army.

Sejanus, having been invested with the command of the prætorian guards, thought he might secure to himself a powerful resource by an office which had hitherto been looked upon as of little importance. With this view, but under pretence of maintaining discipline, he formed a camp of all the cohorts which had before been cantoned in the different quarters of Rome, and the neighbouring towns. Thus he, in a manner, had an army at his command, and the more fit for his service, as it was encamped at the gates of the capital.

29. His crimes.

Though the imperial family was numerous, he attempted to open a way for himself over its ruins. His first victim was Drusus, the emperor's son, against whom he entertained a personal hatred. Having debauched his wife, he prevailed upon her, by a promise of marriage, and the prospect of being empress, to give her husband a slow poison, which put an end to his life. Two years after, Sejanus solicited Tiberius to give him the widow in marriage; but the emperor, though without entertaining the least suspicion of his guilt, gave him a gentle refusal, or rather represented to him the inconveniences that would attend so unequal an alliance. Three sons of Germanicus, who were now the next in succession, and their mother, the virtuous Agrippina, a princess of haughty spirit, and superior to the weakness of her sex, in their turn felt the effects of the minister's villany. He employed

secret spies to watch their conduct, spread invisible snares round them; and, in short, left no means untried to effect their destruction. Their being the children of Germanicus was sufficient to make them objects of the emperor's aversion; he therefore gave easy credit to every thing reported to their disadvantage, and wrote a letter filled with invectives against them to the senate. Agrippina and her eldest son were banished as enemies to their country; and her second son was confined in prison.

Sejanus conspires against the emperor.

Sejanus now became more master of the empire than the emperor himself, who blindly reposing an entire confidence in that favourite, and surrounded by his spies, acted only by his direction. The minister having every thing at his disposal, acquired an absolute and universal dominion from the motives of hope and fear. No distinction was made between him and the emperor, and the same honours were indiscriminately paid to both. Only one step was wanting to put the finishing stroke to such a complication of crimes; the assassination of Tiberius, and the usurpation of the supreme power. The design was formed, and the success would have been infallible, had not the emperor's eyes been opened by private information of this extraordinary conspiracy.

31. Dexterity of Tiberius in getting rid of Sejanus.

His political powers were again roused, and did him excellent service on this occasion. Not daring at first to use severity, he had recourse to artifice, loaded Sejanus with caresses, and caused him to be nominated to the consulship, which furnished an honourable pretence for removing him to a distance. As soon as the new consul arrived in Rome, Tiberius

sounded the minds of the public, and kept them in suspense. He sometimes dropped an expression of dissatisfaction, which cooled the adoration paid to the favourite; sometimes bestowed on him marks of confidence, which prevented his coming to an open rupture. The truth was unveiled by slow degrees; the intentions of the despot were guessed; and the minister was deserted. At last, Macro arrived, with a commission to take upon him the command of the prætorian guards, and a letter of accusation against Sejanus, which was read in the senate. Sejanus was arrested, almost immediately condemned, and executed.

Faithlessness of the friends of Sejanus.

A moment before, on a false report spread by Macro, that Sejanus was associated with the Emperor in the tribunitial power, the senators had redoubled their flatteries and homage. So low does self-interest debase mankind! They who had thrown themselves at his feet with the most servile prostration, now arrogantly insulted his distress. Never was there a stronger picture of the knavery and falsehood of court friends, or of the impetuous levity of the people. The body of Sejanus was treated with every mark of ignominy, and his statues broken; his children were condemned to death, without sparing even his infant daughter. History furnishes numerous examples of these dreadful reverses of fortune; but the passions are seldom corrected by example.

Cruelty of Tiberius.

Tiberius had been struck with terror, and kept himself concealed from the opening of the scene till the catastrophe freed him from apprehension. In vain did the public con-

ceive a flattering hope that the violence of his tyranny would be mitigated, as if it had been principally owing to the minister. The emperor indulging his natural propensity, exhibited a spectacle more horrid than the world had yet beheld. The lives of the people became the sport of his cruelty. Barely to take them away was not sufficient, if their death was not tormenting and atrocious. One of these unhappy men having killed himself, he exclaimed in a tone of discontent, *He has escaped me!*

Horrid practices of informers.

The infamous trade of informer grew into such vogue, that even senators did not blush to exercise it. The facts related by Tacitus and Suetonius make human nature recoil. One instance will enable us to judge of the rest. The mother of Fufius, Sejanus's friend, a woman at the extremity of old age, was executed because she shed tears for her son's death. These judicial murders were committed in consequence of the sentences passed by the senate; and it was the highest degree of tyranny to use as its instrument that tribunal which was formerly so venerable. At last Tiberius, wearied with the tedious forms of justice, ordered a general massacre of all who were detained in prison for the affair of Sejanus. Heaps of carcasses were piled up in the public places; and though the sight must have filled all hearts with the most piercing sorrow, the least token of grief was unpardonable.

He deliberates on the choice of a successor.

In the midst of these barbarities, the old emperor still continued his debaucheries, which he strove to hide from the eyes of the public. Being of a healthy constitution, he treated the

art of physic with contempt, and laughed at every man who, at the age of thirty, could not take the proper methods for securing his own health. However, finding the symptoms of a decay of nature, he turned his thoughts upon the choice of a successor. Caius Caligula, the youngest son of Germanicus, was the only person surviving of that family. He was then twenty-four years of age, beloved by the people for the sake of his father, and acted the part of a fawning assiduous courtier. The emperor, who, through the disguise he put on, saw the real perversity of his character, looked upon him with aversion, and would have preferred Tiberius Gemellus, son of Drusus, his own grandson by blood, which Caius was only by adoption, had it not been for the youth of Gemellus, who was only seventeen, and the licentious life of his mother Livilla, which made his legitimacy be questioned. Puzzled by these difficulties, Tiberius left the decision to fate.

37. The emperor assassinated by Macro.

Caius had attached to his interest Macro, the captain of the prætorian guards, who, on his side, was desirous of securing a support in the favour of the young prince. And Tiberius falling into a swoon, and being thought dead, Macro immediately caused the person whose interest he had espoused to be proclaimed emperor by the soldiers. In the mean time, Tiberius having recovered from his swoon, while every heart was frozen with terror, the præfect ordered him to be smothered with matresses. This emperor ended his life at the age of seventy-eight, in the twenty-third year of his reign, and an object of such universal

abhorrence, that the populace were on the point of insulting his remains. Though some instances of moderation, generosity, and justice, are to be met with in his reign, they have not mitigated the detestation in which his memory is justly held, because his prevailing character was cruelty and knavery; and, with a strong understanding, he had a bad heart. However, Velleius Paterculus, his cotemporary, has loaded him with praises. Is it possible that a courtier of Tiberius and Sejanus should have written a history?

Importance of the popular privilege of electing magistrates.

I shall finish this article with an observation of Montesquieu. 'Augustus had deprived the people of the power of legislation, and of judging criminals against the state; but he had left them, at least in appearance, the privilege of electing the magistrates. Tiberius, who apprehended danger from suffering so numerous a body to assemble, deprived them of this power likewise, and conferred it upon the senate, that is, upon himself. It is incredible what influence this change had in debasing the minds of the great. While the people had the disposal of dignities, the magistrates who stood for them were certainly guilty of great meannesses; but these were concealed by a kind of magnificence with which they were attended. Whether the candidates entertained the people with public shows or dinners, made distributions of money or corn; though the motives were low, there was something noble in the means; because it is always in character for a great man to gain the favour of the people by his liberalities. But when the people had no longer any thing to give, and all employments

were bestowed by the emperor in name of the senate, they were solicited, and obtained by unworthy methods; flattery, infamy, and the blackest crimes, then became the necessary arts of rising.'

We may say, in more simple language, that the nobles lost all elevation of mind when they were obliged to be courtiers, or nothing.

CALIGULA.

A.D. 37. Caligula is at first beloved.

Caius, universally known to the moderns by the name of Caligula, was the idol of the people, from his being the son of Germanicus. He was raised to the throne with unanimous approbation; and nothing could be more agreeable to the senate, than to supersede the will of Tiberius, who had associated with him the young Tiberius, his grandson. But merit is not inherited; and it is but too common to see the glory of great men tarnished by unworthy successors. The pliant Caligula became a monster after his elevation, which occasioned its being said of him, There never was a better servant, nor a worse master.

Performs some good actions.

However, he showed a good disposition at the beginning of his reign, by recalling exiles, suppressing informers, and restoring the privileges of the magistrates and people. He gave leave for the reading of books written with freedom, which had been formerly proscribed;

and refused to receive a memorial containing an account of a real or pretended plot, nobly answering, that as he had done nothing to provoke hatred, he could not hearken to such accusations. Undoubtedly, his apprehension of a rival made him dissemble. Attentive to every means of pleasing and dazzling the populace, he brought back the pantomines which had been dismissed by Tiberius. In play, shows, and silly profusion, he dissipated immense sums of money, which Suetonius says amounted to near three hundred millions of sesterces.* This prodigality, abstracted from the violent passion which he had for public shows, foreboded a pernicious government.

Becomes a monster of tyranny.

The face of affairs was very soon totally changed. Laws, manners, reason, and humanity, were trodden under foot, and Caligula bathed himself in blood. He begun with the murder of Tiberius and Macro, and delighted in acts of cruelty. Guilty of incest with his sisters, and of adultery with every woman of rank, there was no excess could make him blush. He only blushed at having the great Agrippa, who was of obscure birth, for his grandfather, and wanted to have it believed, that his mother Agrippina was the fruit of an incestuous commerce between Augustus and his daughter Julia. He assumed the characters of all the gods, and caused himself to be worshipped sometimes as Jupiter, Juno, Bacchus, Hercules, &c.; and, at last, by an unexampled madness, treated his horse as his first favourite, and thought of making him consul.

* About £2,618,750 Sterling.

These facts, collected by Suetonius, a writer of no great judgment, suppose a manifest lunacy; and it is inconceivable how the Roman people could obey so furious a madman. The account which is given of his expenses, rapine, and tyrannical oppressions, exceeds all probability. They are either instances of folly, unworthy the attention of a mind capable of reflection; or incredible excesses, which pass the bounds of human nature.

Some sayings of Caligula express whatever can be conceived of cruelty. *Strike in such a manner that he may feel himself die! Would to heaven that the Roman people had but one head, that it might be struck off at one blow!* Having burst out into a fit of laughter before the consuls, *I was thinking*, said he, *that with a wink of my eye, I could cause you both to be murdered.* Instances of his cruelty.

Caligula, equally base and bloody, took a fancy to appear at the head of his army, and exhibited a farce, of which the ridiculousness has perhaps been greatly exaggerated by historians. He marched to the banks of the Rhine, as if he had been engaged in some important enterprise, and caused a detachment of his guard to be concealed in a wood, where he made them to be surprised, as if they had been enemies, that he might erect trophies and sing songs of victory. He was next seen to pass to the shore, opposite to Great Britain, of which he meditated the conquest; and having drawn up his army, though without any enemy to oppose him, gave the signal to engage; after which, he made his soldiers gather heaps of shells, and, proud of the spoils of the ocean, returned to Rome to receive the honour of a triumph. 39. Some ridiculous military expeditions.

41. Murder of Caligula. Though the Romans were debased by servility, it was impossible but the dreadful tyranny of a madman must produce conspiracies. Cheræa, the tribune of a prætorian cohort, delivered Rome from that monster, without freeing her from those vices which perpetuate misfortunes. The tyrant was assassinated at the end of the fourth year of his reign. We shall see him succeeded by an idiot, and, of course, deplorable scenes are to be expected.

Unfortunately for us, that part of the annals of Tacitus which contained the reign of Caligula is lost. Nothing can make up for the want of the pencil of that philosophic historian, so well acquainted with men and courts, and who engages the attention even in the most minute details. Scarcely any thing is to be met with in other authors, but a heap of useless matter, or insipid disgusting puerilities, with which modern writers ought not to swell their histories.

CLAUDIUS.

41. The army proclaim Claudius. After the murder of Caligula, Cheræa and the senators were anxious to restore the republic; but the soldiers, who found the benefit of a military power, preferred a government under an emperor. Claudius, the brother of Germanicus, and uncle of Caligula, far from aiming at the empire, was afraid of being mur-

dered, and concealed himself in a corner, till he was accidentally observed by one of the soldiers, who immediately proclaimed him. Some more of the army having arrived, they led him away against his inclination, and joined to take the oath of allegiance. He promised the prætorian soldiers fifteen thousand sesterces a man,* with a proportional donative to the officers; and had scarcely recovered from his fear and astonishment, when he found himself master of the empire. The senate were compelled to acknowledge him; Cheræa was put to death; and all hopes of liberty died with him.

Claudius incapable of governing.

Claudius, though fifty years old, was still in a kind of childhood. A mind naturally weak, blunted by a harsh education, and incapable of any kind of business; *a man half-formed*, as his mother Antonia called him, who, with an idiotical grin, confused look, and vulgar manners, gave evident marks of folly and stupidity. This had alienated the affection of his parents, a misfortune which certainly added to his natural imbecility. Augustus alone showed him some degree of tenderness; but still could not find any employment of which he thought him capable. Could it have been conceived, that the caprice of fortune would one day place him on the throne of Augustus?

His good nature produced good effects.

Claudius, who was naturally of a mild temper, succeeding to Caligula, it required no great efforts to procure the highest degree of popularity. By a behaviour totally opposite to that of his predecessor, he succeeded for some time. He destroyed two lists, entitled the

* About £121 English.

Sword and Dagger, in which that monster had written the names of those whom he intended to put to death. He abolished the presents usually made to the emperor on the first day of the year, which was a mean contemptible method of extorting money. He prohibited all who had relations of their own from making him their heir, another method by which the emperors did not blush to enrich themselves. Clemency and humanity seemed to have succeeded to barbarity; but there was no confidence to be placed in a man susceptible of all kinds of impressions, and who either did good or harm, according to the counsels by which he was governed.

Soon becomes the slave of Messalina.

Messalina, a woman who was the scandal of her sex, the wife of the emperor, shared all his confidence with mean domestics, with a Narcissus, a Pallas, and some other freedmen; monsters of iniquity, whose enormous wealth could be only the produce of villany. The people soon felt the dreadful effects of authority being vested in such hands. Every thing was sold by his freedmen, who, in some degree, made themselves masters both of his person and actions; admitting none to his presence but whom they pleased; dictating or changing his ordinances; in a word, they reigned in his name, and were employed by Messalina in executing her execrable projects.

42. Messalina procures the death of Silanus.

This infamous princess having conceived a passion for her father-in-law, Silanus, and finding that she could not seduce him, vowed his destruction, and concerted the plan with Narcissus, who, one morning at day-break, rushed into the emperor's apartment, with an appear-

ance of terror in his countenance, and told him, that in a dream he had seen him murdered by Silanus. Messalina assured him, that for several nights she had had the same dream; and at that instant the unfortunate Silanus having come into the chamber, in consequence of his receiving a forged order, the timid Claudius, starting at the appearance of a supposed assassin, caused him to be immediately put to death. From this instance we may judge of others.

Conspiracy discovered, and punished.

Such shocking proofs of tyranny could not fail to occasion conspiracies; and Camillus, governor of Dalmatia, taking up arms, assumed the title of emperor, but was abandoned by his army, and murdered by one of the soldiers. At the time when most rigorous methods were taken to discover the accomplices, Messalina and the domestics took the opportunity of gratifying their hatred and rapacity. Claudius presided at the trials in the senate, where the freedmen had the insolence to place themselves, but where Narcissus at least received a reproof. Having asked a freedman of Camillus, what he would have done if his master had become emperor; the other very properly replied, *I would have stood at his back in silence.* Unfortunately, truths make no impression against the insolence of fortunate upstarts.

Death of Arria and Pætus.

It was upon this occasion that the celebrated Arria gave a most extraordinary proof of courage. Pætus, her husband, who had been consul, having been entangled in the conspiracy, could not escape being put to death, and was advised by Arria to prevent the execution. Seeing him wavering and irresolute, she plunged a dagger into her own bosom, and, as she with-

drew it, presented it to him, saying, *Pætus, this does not hurt me.* The husband followed the example of his wife.

43. Expedition into Great Britain.

It could never have been suspected that Claudius had formed any schemes of ambition or extensive conquest. However, he undertook the reduction of Great Britain, which, according to Tacitus, had rather been pointed out than conquered by Cæsar. The Gauls being subdued, this conquest no longer presented the same difficulties; but ought a poor, uncultivated, remote island, inhabited only by savages, to have attracted the arms of a power already oppressed by the number and extent of its provinces? Plautius was commanded to begin the expedition; but his soldiers mutinied, and said, they would not go to fight beyond the bounds of the world. Narcissus came to quiet the mutiny, when the soldiers, insultingly, referred him to the *Saturnalia*,* reminding him of his former condition, and preferring rather to obey their general, than hearken to a domestic.

Britain and Mauritania reduced.

The emperor was greatly encouraged by the success of the army under Plautius; and, being desirous of appearing at the head of his troops, passed over to Britain, where he remained sixteen days, took some strongholds, and celebrated a triumph. Plautius, at the end of a war which had continued four years, reduced a considerable part of the country on the south side of the Thames to a Roman province. A little time before this, Mauritania had met the same

* At the feast of the Saturnalia, the slaves were permitted to take great liberties with their masters.

fate; and these additions to the empire only served to hasten its decline.

To his military exploits, of which Claudius was excessively vain, he next added the care of administering in civil matters, and assumed the office of censor. He issued a number of foolish edicts. Three letters added to the alphabet seemed to him a reformation of great consequence, but they did not outlive him. Amidst all his follies some prudent regulations were made; but unfortunately they could not fail to share the contempt with which every thing done by that prince was treated. Some edicts of Claudius.

Counsellors made an infamous trade of an honourable profession. They hired their tongues and pens to serve the purposes of calumny and injustice to whoever would pay the price of prostituted talents. Silius, the consul elect, endeavoured to put a stop to this mode of plundering. 'They multiply accusations, quarrels, and acts of injustice, that they may enrich themselves by chicanery,' said he, 'as physicians do with disorders. We should not have so many law suits if the counsellors did not profit by them.' The counsellors replied, that they gave up their own affairs to serve other people; that eloquence was an honourable road to fortune; and if they were deprived of the fruits of their studies, there would be an end to application. They were prohibited by the emperor from receiving more than ten thousand sesterces. He regulates the fees of counsellors.

Those days were past, in which glory, patriotism, or the hope of rising to the first honours of the state, were sufficient motives to animate men to steer this noble course. If ad-

vantages were not to be attained by people who had no fortune, or were destitute of generosity, the bar might have been entirely shut up. But it was likewise necessary that the reputation of the counsellors, among whom were always a number of senators, should be guarded from every suspicion of meanness. The ancient regulation was revived by Trajan.

Foreigners admitted as citizens, and into the senate.

The emperor likewise decided in another affair, of much greater consequence to the state. The people of Cisalpine Gaul and the province of Narbonne enjoyed all the privileges of Roman citizens. This title had been conferred upon the chiefs of the other Gaulish provinces after Cæsar's conquest, but without the privilege of being admitted into the senate, which was an honour they were very anxious to obtain, and at last procured, in opposition to the most powerful representations. Claudius expected to add to the strength of the empire, by admitting foreigners to rise to the first honours of the state, which in the end was carried beyond all bounds.

Whether it did good or harm

'By this means,' says Bossuet, 'all the subjects of the empire thought themselves Romans. The honours of a victorious people were gradually communicated to those whom they had subdued. A place in the senate was open to them, and they might even hope to arrive at the imperial throne. Thus, by Roman clemency, all the provinces uniting with Rome made but one nation, of which she was the common parent.' On the contrary, it may be said, that there were no longer any Romans, when all distinctions were thrown down; that this mixture of all nations had annihilated the ruling peo-

ple; that Rome ceased to be the object of patriotic affection, when the greatest part of her citizens necessarily preferred another country; and that, therefore, this was one of the chief causes of her ruin.

When we reflect, that there was no longer almost any of the original stock left even in Rome, this misfortune will appear unavoidable. At the time that Claudius took the number of the Roman citizens, they amounted to near seven millions; a number infinitely superior to what they were when the republic subdued the whole world.

48. Messalina marries Silius.

While the emperor was employed, or seemed to be employed in public affairs, his wife, who ruled him as she pleased, openly gave herself up to the most shameful debaucheries, and, glutted with pleasures, delighted in rendering herself infamous. Having fallen in love with Silius, she made him divorce his wife, who was of noble birth; but that was only a small part of her offence, compared with her having been solemnly married to him while Claudius was on a journey to Ostia; an incredible fact, if it had not the testimony of every historian. The stupid emperor was informed of it by some of his freedmen, who had hitherto been the instruments employed by Messalina in her poisonings and other enormous crimes, but whom she had the indiscretion at last to provoke.

She is put to death.

Struck with consternation, and trembling at the news, he exclaimed, *Am I still emperor?* They dispelled his fears; and Silius, Mnester, the buffoon, and a number of other accomplices in the lewdness of his wife, were put to death. She was preparing to appease his an-

ger, and probably would have succeeded, if Narcissus had not given orders to kill her. Claudius neither testified joy nor sorrow; and when he was informed of her death, he had not the curiosity to inquire by what means it happened.

Claudius marries his niece Agrippina.

He had already married three wives; and his domestics, who might more properly be called his masters, determined him to marry a fourth. His niece, Agrippina, the daughter of Germanicus, and widow of Domitius, was preferred to be empress, through the influence of Pallas, who was one of her gallants. She was another Messalina, though her behaviour was not so openly scandalous; but her ambition was as violent and criminal as that of the former. Claudius pretended to have some scruples, because they were so nearly related; but this obstacle was soon removed, by one of his courtiers getting the senate to approve of his marriage. Some of the senators carried their abject flattery so far as to say, that, in case of refusal, the emperor should be compelled, though at the same time it was universally known that he indulged in all the privileges of a husband. A decree was passed, to empower uncles to marry the daughters of their brothers. In another case, they would probably have given leave for the brother to marry the sister; so easily did they make the laws yield to the reigning power. There were but one or two men who took the advantage of this indulgence, which, undoubtedly, was owing to the influence that morals still had on the minds of the most abandoned; or, rather, because such marriages could seldom have happened, though they had been lawful.

The great object of Agrippina's attention was to govern, and to secure the empire for her son, the young Domitius. She adopted banishments, poison, murders, and every criminal resource, to get rid of those who were likely to obstruct her schemes. She made a match between her son and the emperor's daughter, Octavia, and procured his adoption to the prejudice of Britannicus, the brother of Octavia. Seneca, who was celebrated for his wit and ostentatious display of philosophy, had been banished for being guilty of adultery with a princess; but Agrippina imagining that he might be useful to Nero, the new name of Domitius, had him recalled, that he might make up, by his instructions, for the bad education of that prince. She placed Burrhus, a brave and worthy officer, whom she thought might be attached to her from gratitude, at the head of the prætorian guards. In a word, Claudius, who saw nothing but through her eyes, left her the sole guidance of every thing. She was afraid that Domitia, the sister of her first husband, might rival her influence over Nero, and therefore caused her to be accused of sorcery, and condemned to suffer death for an imaginary offence.

Ambition of Agrippina.

In the mean time the emperor gave ear to Narcissus, who was become the enemy of Agrippina, because she made Pallas her sole favourite. He showed his sorrow for the injustice he had done to Britannicus, and gave vent to some threatening expressions against his wife; but she prevented any bad consequences to herself or her son. Not satisfied with causing Narcissus to be removed from court, she employed the talents of the celebrated Locusta to poison her

54. The emperor poisoned by his wife.

husband. Claudius died at sixty-three years of age.

The provinces ruled by receivers.

His receivers, who were private knights, or even freedmen, whose duty it was to collect his revenues in the provinces, were vested with all the authority of magistrates, and their sentences declared to be as valid as those of the emperor; by which means the provinces were subjected to the oppressions of the tax-gatherer.

Honours conferred upon Pallas.

By a decree of the senate, Pallas was honoured with the ensigns of the prætorian dignity, the emperor entreated to make him wear a gold ring, and fifteen millions of sesterces* were decreed to him as a reward for his services. The freedman declined to receive the gift, upon which a new decree was passed in his honour, representing him as the reviver of ancient manners, though he was possessed of immense wealth. Could the minds of men have been more debased by Asiatic despotism?

Rhadamistus. Rome sunk in baseness.

During this reign, Mithridates, a king of Armenia, was deposed and murdered by Rhadamistus, who was his nephew, his brother-in-law, and son-in-law. The crimes committed by ambition, so common all over the East, no longer excite curiosity, because a slavish barbarous people are unworthy the attention of cultivated minds; but to see Rome immersed in guilt, a prey to all the horrors of tyranny, and, while the mistress of the world, sunk to the lowest pitch of baseness, is an object which cannot fail to give birth to the most serious reflections.

* About 121,093*l.* English.

Corruption has been seen to spring up by degrees. What a number of atrocious deeds has it not occasioned in the republic? However, the Romans at that time preserved some remains of their former greatness of soul. Even while they were selling themselves to support the views of ambition, they showed the high spirit and courage of their ancestors; but now they are seen to crouch basely under their chains, and even to flatter the infamous vices of those by whom they are oppressed. Thus the ruin of morals leads to slavery, and slavery annihilates every idea of morals.

Progress of its corruption.

NERO.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE SUCCESSION OF NERO TILL THE WAR IN BRITAIN.

54. Ridiculous apotheosis of Claudius.

The death of Claudius was kept secret till Agrippina had made such arrangements as the circumstances required. Burrhus caused Nero to be recognised by the prætorian guards, and the senate eagerly followed their example. The stupid prince, who had just ended his days by poison, was ranked among the gods; and the new emperor spoke his funeral oration, in which his prudence and wisdom were highly extolled.

This eulogium, though delivered by the prince, provoked the laughter of the audience; and Seneca, who had composed it, afterwards wrote a satire on the divinity of Claudius. But how had he the assurance to put ridiculous falsehoods into the mouth of his pupil? Till that time the emperors had shown, though in different degrees, some talents for oratory and composition. Nero, who was then only in his seventeenth year, applied himself to every other kind of exercise, or rather amusement. His inclinations, though yet disguised, were entirely on the side of frivolity, and even vice. Being an enemy to business, he owed his first reputation to two men who managed affairs for him.

Seneca and Burrhus manage the government.

Burrhus and Seneca, between whom subsisted the closest union, did some excellent things in his name. The courts of justice recovered their authority, and, for a time, despotism ceased to alarm the people. The public happiness was announced by a discourse breathing the spirit of moderation, which was pronounced by the prince, and afterwards engraven upon tables of silver; and all hearts were charmed by an affecting expression of Nero; *I wish I had not learned to write*, said he, before signing a death warrant. On another occasion, the senate returning him thanks, he replied, *I expect them when I shall be worthy of them.* Nothing is so easy for sovereigns, when properly tutored, as to dazzle by fine appearances; but these only increase the misery of the public, when it is undeceived by facts.

At first imposed upon the people.

We have lately seen several detestable reigns begun with measures extremely well calculated for the public good. The emperors seemed to

have endeavoured at first to gain the confidence of their subjects, in order to lull them asleep under the yoke of despotism. The new reign will present a picture of equal horror with any of the preceding; because the ministers, who, at the beginning, followed the dictates of virtue, could not inspire the love of it into a prince, who was led by every inducement to the commission of evil.

55. Nero is desirous to get rid of Britannicus.

Nero, who was already corrupted by flatterers, slighting his illustrious consort, Octavia, threw himself into the arms of a freedwoman; and this amour was winked at by Seneca and Burrhus, probably from an apprehension that opposition might be productive of still greater mischiefs. But Agrippina, whose rage was inflamed to the highest pitch, for having lost her ascendancy, seized that opportunity of openly showing her resentment, and threatened her son with declaring in favour of Britannicus, whom she had sacrificed to him, and who, being then about thirteen or fourteen years of age, might soon become a formidable rival.

Poisons him, and persecutes Agrippina.

Upon this Nero threw off all restraint, and daringly committed a crime of the blackest dye; causing the young prince to be poisoned at a banquet, in his own and his mother's presence. He then distributed the spoils of the deceased to Burrhus, Seneca, and the principal men of the court, probably with a design to buy them over to his interest; after which, he published an edict, declaring that now he had lost his brother, all his hopes were centered in the republic. Agrippina, being unable longer to smother her rage, was forbid the palace, and accused of treason; but she found means to

justify herself, and her resentment subsided, upon being restored to some appearance of credit.

His nocturnal rambles.

After so horrid a crime committed in cool blood, it is not at all surprising that Nero so far shook off all rules of decency, as to disguise himself, and ramble about the streets in the night, accompanied by a set of young debauchees, insulting some, robbing others, exposing himself to a thousand affronts; sometimes beaten by those who did not know him, and applauding himself for these low frolics. The senator Montanus, having treated him very roughly in one of his nocturnal rambles, and being afterwards informed that it was the emperor, had the imprudence to write to him a letter of excuse, and received for answer the following short billet; *What! a man who has beaten Nero still alive!* The only refuge left for Montanus was a voluntary death.

The government supports itself, but cannot do so long.

The affairs of the state being in the hands of two able ministers, suffered little by these irregularities of the sovereign. Several taxes were abolished, and the extortions of the collectors of the revenue restrained by an equitable regulation. Less would have been sufficient to win the affections of the people, whose views are limited to the present time, and do not penetrate into futurity. But the murder of Britannicus, the debaucheries and follies of Nero, were presages of all the horrors of tyranny. Neither Seneca nor Burrhus could long preserve any influence over him. A licentious woman hurried him on to new crimes.

Nero commits parricide.

Poppæa then made a brilliant figure at Rome by her beauty, gracefulness, wit, and immense

fortune; in a word, she was a woman possessed of every qualification except virtue. Otho, a man of pleasure, but entirely destitute of honour, and regardless of the ties of morality, had seduced her from her husband, and afterwards married her. The emperor conceiving a violent passion for her, she soon aspired to the honour of his bed; but foreseeing that Agrippina would not suffer him to divorce Octavia, she resolved to effect her ruin, and painted her in the blackest colours. She excited against that haughty princess the jealousy of her son, by telling him that he was still kept in a state of pupilage; that his mother had engrossed the whole power, while he was not even master of his own conduct; and at last drew him into the commission of parricide.

59. He causes his mother Agrippina to be assassinated.

As neither the sword nor poison seemed proper instruments for the commission of that crime, which it was of the last importance to shroud in impenetrable darkness, an abandoned freedman proposed to construct a vessel in such a manner, that a part of it might separate when on the high sea, and sink to the bottom. The contrivance was highly applauded; for who could suspect any artifice in a shipwreck? Nero, in order to draw his mother into the snare, feigned a return of affection, by which she was easily deceived, paid him a visit at Baiæ, and went on board the vessel. The machine did not play and crush her to pieces as was expected; and though her attendants perished, she got safe on shore.

Burrhus and Seneca consulted.

This news filled the emperor with consternation. He imagined that he already saw his mother arming the soldiers and people against

him; he therefore immediately consulted Burrhus and Seneca on this emergency. These ministers, who are suspected not to have been unacquainted with the former project, hesitated at first; but at last, whether through shameful want of spirit, or detestable motives of policy, they acceded to the emperor's views. Orders were given for the perpetration of the crime, and the freedman, Anicetus, eagerly undertook the commission. Agrippina, at sight of the assassins, called out to their leader, *Strike this womb which bore Nero!* and expired, pierced with a multitude of wounds. Thus were the numberless crimes she committed to raise the fortune of her son, or rather to share the dominion with him, punished by that very son, by the commission of the most atrocious wickedness.

They calm the remorse of the emperor.

Few men, however distinguished by their crimes, have a soul sufficiently callous to be proof against remorse. Even Nero felt its severest pangs; and terror for his own safety, joined to the clamours of conscience, reduced him almost to despair. Too short a punishment for parricide! But flattery found a way to dissipate the storm. Burrhus relieved his fears, by showing how entirely the prætorian guards were devoted to his interest. Seneca composed an apology for him, in which Agrippina was falsely charged with conspiring against his life; and, in a short time, the senate, the people, and the army, showed the greatest demonstrations of joy for the commission of so horrid an act, for which they even offered sacrifices, and made it an occasion of festivity. However, several phenomena in the heavens,

an eclipse, and storms of thunder, were looked upon as signs of the Divine wrath, in which, says Tacitus, the gods had so little concern, that Nero enjoyed the empire for a considerable number of years, which he spent in the commission of new crimes. The secrets of Providence are impenetrable; nor can they be read in the phenomena of nature, which every man interprets according to his own fancy. God will one day punish or reward. This is all that it concerns us to know; but superstition endeavours to pry into futurity, and misleads itself.

Nero gives himself up to ridiculous amusements.

Agrippina had been a curb to Nero; but being now freed from her presence, he gave the rein to his taste for low and trifling amusements. His whole attention was taken up with chariots, horses, music and plays. He exhibited first to his courtiers, and then to the public, his talents as a charioteer and actor; and kept a number of people in pay, only for the purpose of applauding him in those ridiculous farces. His noblest amusements consisted in composing wretched verses, corrected by obscure poets, according to their own fancy, or in listening to the disputes of a set of pretended philosophers, whom he retained for his diversion. During his fourth consulship, for the emperors had always continued the custom of assuming occasionally the title of consul, sometimes for a few months, he instituted games after the Greek model, to be celebrated every fifth year, to which he gave the name of *Neronian*. He disputed the prize of poetry and eloquence against the first men of those professions in Rome; and would certainly have

carried it, even though his competitors had been Ciceros and Virgils. The pantomimes soon after became common, and their art was carried to an astonishing degree of perfection. It is related, that a philosopher, struck with the performance of one of those mute actors, exclaimed, *I understand you; your hands speak.*

Vitiated taste of the Romans.

It will not be improper to observe, that, if the Romans had always entertained a passion for public diversions, without a taste for such as are really worthy of a polished people, this passion and bad taste must have been increased, when they ceased to take a share in public affairs, and were given up to the caprices of a court. They had no good tragedies; and Terence had never been able to improve their taste, so as to subdue their relish for farces. The gladiators always carried the palm from the poets. It may indeed be alleged, in favour of the pantomimes, that they did not stain the scene with blood; but they too frequently transgressed the laws of decency.

CHAPTER II.

WAR IN GREAT BRITAIN. AFFAIRS OF ROME TILL THE FIRST CONSPIRACY.

Revolt in Great Britain.

THE more a sovereign indulges himself in pleasures, the more miserable, commonly, are the people. Great Britain groaned under a tyrannical government, from the oppression of the

army and the extortion of the collectors of the revenue; and the spirit of revolt spread rapidly among that unconquerable people, who submitted only to superior force, and champed the curb with indignation. Suetonius Paulinus, a celebrated general, who had newly arrived in that country, being unacquainted with the state of affairs, undertook the conquest of Mona the Isle of Anglesey, where the Druids had fixed the centre of their fanaticism. He succeeded, notwithstanding the terror with which the Romans were struck by the horrid appearance of those priests, who ran up and down, accompanied by women in a hideous dress, with torches in their hands, and filled the air with their imprecations. After the defeat of the barbarians, he caused his soldiers to cut down the sacred groves, in which the Druids religiously stained the altars with human blood.

61. Suetonius defeats Boadicea.

Suetonius, who had been successful at Mona, did not entertain the least suspicion of what was carrying on behind him. The Britons had taken arms under the standards of Boadicea, a heroine superior to every sense of danger, stormed several fortified places, and massacred great numbers of the Romans; and though the general marched with all imaginable speed to put a stop to the insurrection, he was obliged to abandon London to destruction: but having collected a body of ten thousand men, he chose a post so advantageous, that the enemy, though infinitely superior in number, were defeated in a great battle, with the loss, as is said, of fourscore thousand men; and Boadicea laid violent hands on herself, that she might not survive the misfortunes of her country.

That general recalled.

Suetonius, being thwarted by the jealousy of the quæstor, reaped no advantage from his victory; and Nero sent Polyctetes, a freedman, to inquire into his conduct. The pride and insolence of this envoy raised the contempt even of the Britons, who saw, with astonishment, a lacquey giving law to a victorious general. Paulinus was recalled, and his successors carefully avoided a war, pluming themselves on the preservation of a tranquillity which was only the effect of their own effeminacy, and thus secured themselves from the malice of the court, though the interests of the state suffered by their conduct.

Four hundred slaves put to death.

Some transactions at Rome have a better claim to our attention. The præfect of the city being assassinated by one of his slaves, it was made a question whether, according to the barbarous custom established in ancient times, capital punishment should be inflicted on the whole number, amounting to four hundred. The people were clamorous in their opposition, and their sentiments were supported by a party in the senate; but Cassius, a celebrated lawyer, stood forth in defence of the ancient custom. 'It is objected,' said he, 'that many innocent persons will be put to death: but this is only what happens when troops are decimated for misbehaviour; the brave draw lots in common with the guilty: every similar example of severity contains in it something contrary to the rules of justice: but the partial evil is compensated by the general good;' and his sanguinary counsel prevailed over the voice of humanity.

Thus, barbarous customs, consecrated by

their antiquity, are sometimes abetted by persons who ought to be better acquainted with the injustice of them. According to this method of reasoning, it was necessary for the public good that thousands of lives should answer for one, and the crime of an individual be punished by the death of all. Doubtless the slaves were ranked among insects. The Petronian law, indeed, prohibited their being exposed to wild beasts, without permission from the magistrates; a law calculated in some degree to mitigate the horrors of their condition, if we suppose the magistrates to be men of humanity. But is it possible that they could be so under a tyrant, and with the prejudices of tyranny?

Laws against high treason revived.

Some satirical writings making their appearance about this time, Nero revived the laws against high treason. Antistius, the prætor, would have been put to death on this account, had not Thrasea courageously given his opinion only for banishment. Veiento, another person of distinction, suffered the same punishment, and his books were ordered to be burnt. Their being prohibited caused them to be eagerly sought after; and, as is the common fate of such works, they sunk into oblivion when they were no longer dangerous.

62. Death of Burrhus. Seneca retires.

Burrhus and Seneca, notwithstanding they sometimes showed a disgraceful complaisance to the tyrant, were the only persons in any degree capable of mitigating the horrors of his government. Unhappily the first died, and his master is suspected of having shortened his life. Seneca, finding himself on the brink of disgrace, resolved to prevent it by a volun-

tary retreat, and offered to the emperor the immense riches he had acquired; but Nero refused to accept them, bestowed on him new marks of confidence and affection, and put on an appearance of regret, though filled with a secret joy at his removal from court. The works of this philosopher wear an imposing air of Stoicism, which it is impossible to reconcile with his opulence and luxury. We shall see him die with a courage which only renders the weaknesses of his life more surprising.

Murder of Octavia.

Tigellinus, the new captain of the prætorian guards, a monster worthy of Nero, became the instrument of his crimes. In a short time, Octavia was not only divorced and banished, but murdered; and her head may be said to have been the nuptial present bestowed on Poppæa, her infamous rival. To complete this scene of villany, and blacken the memory of the innocent empress, the freedman Anicetus affirmed that she had been guilty of adultery with him; and he could not have found a more proper method of paying his court to the emperor. After the death of Octavia, solemn thanksgivings were offered to the gods; a ceremony which always followed the murder of persons of distinction. Thus did Nero sport with heaven and mankind.

Horrid debaucheries.

His cruelty was equalled by his debaucheries. At an entertainment given him by Tigellinus, he personated a female, and, as such, was married to one Pythagoras. On another occasion he espoused an eunuch, whom he chose for his bride. These abominations ought not to stain the historic page, did they not

show how much the abuse of power and intoxication of the passions may degrade a sovereign; and at least prove, that, by trampling on the laws of society and nature, he exposes himself to the most incredible defamations.

Burning of Rome.

To him is attributed a conflagration, by which more than two-thirds of Rome were destroyed. A report was publicly circulated, that he had viewed it with pleasure from the top of a tower, singing a poem on the burning of Troy. These reports were probably the effects of hatred; for what might not be believed of Nero? He had looked with uneasiness upon the irregularity of the city, and its narrow crooked streets; and caused it to be rebuilt in a manner which increased its beauty, and made it more secure from fires.

Nero's new palace.

A magnificent palace rose upon the public ruins, shining with gold and jewels, and containing in its circuit, forests, lakes, and lawns, with all the riches of art. When Nero saw it finished, he observed, *Now I begin to lodge like a human creature.* A great man would have had no need of such a lodging.

His project for a canal.

His head being filled with extravagant ideas, he undertook to dig a navigable canal, from the lake Avernus to the mouth of the Tiber, a space of one hundred and sixty miles, through a rocky country without water. The work was impracticable, and, had it been possible to be executed, would have been of no great utility. Great labour was expended upon it; and so much toil and pains thrown away were counted as nothing. The substance of the empire was wasted by the emperor's excessive

profusion and extravagant schemes; and therefore he made it a rule to commit universal depredations.

The Christians accused of setting fire to the city.

Though he had been lavish in administering relief to the people after the fire, yet the voice of the public continued to charge him with having kindled it; and he thought he could clear himself by throwing the accusation upon innocent persons. The Christians were already numerous, though buried in obscurity; and the public, unacquainted with their religion, confounded it with the grossest superstitions. They were hated, because looked upon to be enemies of the human race. This unjust character is given them even by Tacitus, who seems to confound them with the Jews. Nero charged them with being the incendiaries; and a vast number of them were put to death by the most dreadful punishments; a spectacle agreeable to the Roman taste! He himself, seated on a car, made it a piece of amusement to see those unhappy victims devoured by beasts, or burned alive, to supply the place of torches; and their condemnation was looked upon as one of the pleasures of his cruelty.

CHAPTER III.

END OF NERO'S REIGN.

65. Conspiracy of Piso and Epicharis.

This monster at last tired out the patience of his subjects; and a number of persons of rank, animated by the freedwoman Epicharis, with

Piso at their head, entered into a conspiracy against him. The secret was inviolably kept; but a slave guessed the meaning of his master's preparations, and some of the conspirators were seized, by whose want of resolution the rest were discovered. Epicharis bore the torture with heroic courage, which was the more remarkable as she was a woman of pleasure. Torrents of blood flowed in every quarter. Piso, just before his death, made his will, filled with the most fulsome adulation of Nero, that he might obtain favour for a faithless wife, of whom he was distractedly fond.

Courage of the conspirators.

On the contrary, two of the conspirators displayed their principles of liberty with the noblest intrepidity. The emperor interrogating Subrius why he had violated his oath, the tribune replied, 'Because I hated you. No man was more faithful to you while you deserved to be beloved; but when you became the parricide of your mother, the murderer of your wife, a charioteer, a player, and an incendiary, you necessarily was the object of my aversion.' These words wounded the tyrant in the most sensible manner. The centurion Sulpicius answered a like question, by saying, *I entered into the conspiracy out of zeal for your service, as there was no other way to put an end to your crimes.*

Seneca obliged to open his veins.

The high reputation of Seneca and Lucan, make their deaths more interesting. The first was accused, and perhaps on good grounds, though the proofs were not entirely clear, of being privy to the plot; and his pupil, who hated him in his heart, was delighted with this opportunity to get rid of him. An order was

therefore sent him to put an end to his life, and he opened his veins, in which he was imitated by his wife Paulina. Not being able to obtain permission to make any bequests in favour of his friends, *I leave you*, said he, *the most precious gift remaining to me, the example of my life*. This fine genius, will never be the model of true philosophers or good writers. He vitiated taste by his affected style; and the ostentatious austerity of his moral writings was contradicted by his actions.

Death of Lucan.

Lucan, the Seneca of the poets, suffered the same death. He had flattered Nero in his Pharsalia; but afterwards became his mortal enemy, from a resentment common to authors, because the prince, who dabbled in poetry, had shown himself a jealous rival, and mortified his vanity.

Death of Petronius.

A number of illustrious men were now put to death upon the least suspicion. I shall not mention Petronius, that elegant Epicurean, Nero's master in the science of voluptuousness, and the reputed author of an obscure and ingenious satire, of which some fragments are extant. But I must not pass over in silence Soranus and Thrasea, two senators worthy of ancient Rome, but whose virtues were imputed to them as crimes, by a court sunk in every abomination.

Remarkable trial of Thrasea.

The crimes alleged against Thrasea, were his not offering sacrifices for the preservation of the emperor and his *divine voice;* blaming his appearing on the stage; quitting the senate house when the apology for Agrippina's murder was read; and absenting himself when divine honours were decreed to Poppæa, who

was ranked among the goddesses, after her husband, in a fit of passion, had given her a kick with his foot, of which she died; with other charges of the same nature. Thrasea being a Stoic, both by practice and profession, his accusers did not fail to represent that sect as pernicious to the state, by inspiring its followers with a love of liberty. That illustrious Roman being condemned by the senate, was indulged in the choice of his own death, a favour which was often readily granted. He prepared himself for his fate with calm resignation; and having caused his veins to be opened, sprinkled the floor with his blood, at the same time saying, *Let us offer a libation to Jupiter the deliverer.* The firmness of the Stoic had not lessened his indulgence for human frailty. He often repeated this maxim, *He who hates vices, hates mankind.* But ought we not rather to hate vice, and do good to the vicious?

Tiridates pays court to Nero.

In the midst of these scenes of horror, arrived in Rome Tiridates, brother of Vologeses, king of Parthia, who had lately received the crown of Armenia as a free gift, after having long endeavoured in vain to seize it by force. This prince met with a most pompous reception from the emperor; and the more he humbled himself, the more favours were bestowed on him: But, being a witness of Nero's frivolous and unbecoming amusements, he at last looked with contempt on the man before whom he had fallen prostrate. Corbulo, the greatest general of the age, had till that time curbed the Parthians, who began to be very formidable to the Romans. In him the people placed their hopes,

and all wished to see him on the throne. Such superior merit was an unpardonable crime. Corbulo was recalled, and on the road received an order to put an end to his life.

Vologeses refuses.

Vologeses being pressed by Nero to imitate his brother Tiridates, and pay him a vist at Rome, wrote him for answer, *You can cross the sea more easily than I can; come into Asia, and we will agree upon an interview.* The emperor being provoked at this refusal, had thoughts of marching against the Parthians; but another species of ambition turned his views to a different object.

67. Nero's ridiculous journey into Greece.

He resolved to take a journey into Greece, in order to gain the prize in the theatrical contests, and set out with a whole army of musicians and buffoons. He presented himself at all the games; gained a hundred and eighteen crowns; and imagined he had eclipsed all the heroes of the republic. To show his gratitude for the admiration in which the Grecians held his talents, or rather the flattery with which they soothed his ridiculous vanity, he declared that country free; but, notwithstanding this imaginary enfranchisement, it still continued to groan under every species of oppression. He then returned in triumph to Italy, and his entry into Rome formed an uncommon spectacle to that city, which was filled with trophies. The senate, the knights, and the people, followed his chariot, making the air resound with disgraceful acclamations of *Long live the victor in the Olympic and Pythian games! Nero is another Hercules! Nero is a new Apollo! He alone has been successful in every species of combat, in every species of games, &c.* At the same time

that the terrors of despotism forced the Romans to this abject behaviour, it redoubled their hatred against the despot. And we shall soon see them delivered from the tyrant by an almost universal conspiracy.

68. Revolt of Vindex and Galba.

Vindex gave the signal in Gaul, where he commanded. He was a native of that province, descended of an illustrious family, and a warm friend to his country. It was no difficult matter to rouse a people who had not yet lost their high spirit, though loaded with oppression. Being in want of succours, he addressed himself to Galba, governor of Spain, a man of a mild and peaceful disposition, descended from an ancient family, and who had escaped the cruelty of the tyrant only by his unenterprising temper and the obscurity of his life. Galba, who was discontented with the government, hesitated on the proposal, and consulted his friends, who represented to him, that, by deliberating on such a subject, he had already made himself criminal; and that he must immediately either march against Vindex, who offered him the empire, or take arms against the emperor. At last he determined upon a revolt; but refused the title of emperor, with which his troops wanted to invest him, declaring himself only the lieutenant of the senate and people.

Death of Vindex. Moderation of Virginius.

On this news, the governors of the provinces, transported with joy at finding a head, eagerly joined his party. Virginius had a command in Germany, and, though secretly an enemy to Nero, marched against Vindex; but the two generals had an interview, and came to an agreement. The Gauls were to enter Besançon, as had been stipulated; but the Roman army, un-

acquainted with the treaty, and believing itself attacked, fell upon the troops of Vindex, which were cut to pieces, and the general killed himself in a fit of despair. Virginius might have made himself master of the empire. He did not esteem Galba, and hated Nero; therefore, without declaring in favour of the former, he waited the event, resolved to do his country all the service possible. This man several times refused the sovereignty, and died in the office of consul under Nerva.

Nero condemned to death.

Had the tyrant been possessed of the least degree of courage, perhaps he might have been able to dissipate the storm. But, far from taking any measures, or even forming a vigorous resolution, he only showed a torpid pusillanimity. Nymphidius, who was joint commander of the prætorian guards with Tigellinus, corrupted those troops, by promising them immense sums in Galba's name; and Nero, abandoned by his guards, fled in dismay, to conceal himself in the house of a freedman. The senate assembling, declared him an enemy to the state, and, as such, condemned him to be punished, *according to the ancient mode*, and proclaimed Galba emperor. This dreadful news was carried to Nero by the freedman, who explained to him what was meant by the *ancient mode*, that the criminal should be tied to a beam, and beaten to death with roads. Unable to bear the thoughts of such a punishment, Nero, with trembling hand, tried the points of two daggers; but, disarmed by his cowardice, he cried out, that the fatal hour was not yet come. However, a party of soldiers coming to seize him, he was obliged to have recourse to

He kills himself.

the last remedy, and, summoning up his courage, presented the point of his dagger, at the same time calling for the assistance of his secretary, by whose aid he plunged it into his throat. Thus died Nero at the age of thirty, leaving behind him a name which seems to express the utmost depravity of human nature.

With him ended the family of Augustus. A Tiberius, a Caligula, a Claudius, a Nero! These were the men for whom Augustus had usurped the empire of the world, for whom Rome had subdued so many nations. These were the masters, whom opulence, corruption of manners, the contempt of virtue, and prevalence of vice had, for a long series of years, been preparing for the Romans!

GALBA. OTHO. VITELLIUS.

After the defeat of Vindex, Galba, imagining that he was ruined, withdrew to a city in Spain, and was even thinking of laying violent hands on himself, when he received the news of the revolution. Anxious to take the advantage of the change in affairs, but being old, rigid, and so severe an economist, that he approached to avarice; incapable of conforming to circumstances; too feeble at the age of seventy-three to support the weight of government, it was to him inevitable destruction. Let us take a cur-

68. Galba made emperor.

sory view of his faults, that we may see the source of his misfortunes.

Draws upon himself the hatred of the army.

Nothing could be so hazardous as to provoke the army, since they had lately bestowed the imperial dignity, and could easily resume the gift. However, Galba was scarcely arrived in Italy, when he caused a legion of marines to be massacred, who had been newly raised, and had applied to him for a confirmation of their establishment. The prætorian guards expected the whole, or at least a part of the money, which had been promised to them; but he dashed their hopes, by saying, *That an emperor chooses, does not purchase, his soldiers.* From that moment they became his enemies. Could he hope to reign without them?

The people complain.

On the other hand, the people, whom the presents and entertainments of Nero had made insensible of his tyranny, murmured at the avarice of a prince who refused them the same amusements. A number of citizens, who were stripped of the fortunes which they had acquired during the last reign, were provoked at their being ruined. These proceedings were the more imprudent, as a number of acts of injustice had obscured the few instances in which the proceeding was truly equitable. Nymphidius having formed a party to raise himself to the empire, Galba ordered a number of people of rank, who were accused without evidence, to be put to military execution. He spared the infamous Tigellinus, while he exercised his severity against men who were much less hateful. Terrified at the smallest expense, he winked at the extortions of three of his agents, who set every thing to sale, and greedily seized the

opportunity of enriching themselves. He seemed then not to be a miser or economist, but to procure the means for his ministers to make rich by their rapacity.

69. Galba adopts Piso.

The army in Germany were already desirous to have another emperor, that is to say, they proposed to elect one, and the revolt could not fail to prove contagious. Galba, sensible of his own weakness, required the support of Piso, who was less distinguished by his illustrious birth than by his eminent virtues, and therefore adopted him. His advice to Piso, as given by Tacitus, is worthy of a sage. Exhorting him to conduct himself with prudence and moderation, 'This is not the country where one family governs, and all the rest are slaves,' said he, 'you are to reign over men, who can neither endure total subjection nor perfect liberty.' Piso had no opportunity to put his advice in practice.

Otho forms a scheme for seizing the empire.

There was a seditious person so provoked by the preference which Galba had given to Piso, that he conspired to destroy them both. This rival was Otho, the husband of Poppæa, and the favourite of Nero, before the emperor was seduced by his wife. He was infamous for his luxury and debauchery, immersed in debt to the amount of two hundred millions of sesterces,* and reduced to a situation from whence he had no means to extricate himself, but by striking a desperate stroke. To fall in battle, or by the hand of justice, he said, was to him nearly the same thing; and his friends and slaves advised him to run every hazard.

* About £1,614,583 English.

He was likewise encouraged by the promises of astrologers, 'a kind of men,' says Tacitus, 'who impose upon people of rank by seducing promises; who are always disapproved of in our country, but still encouraged.' They promised the empire to Otho, and there was nothing he was more willing to believe.

Proclaimed by the prætorian guards.

Two enterprising soldiers undertook to manage the conspiracy, and kindled the flame of rebellion. On the day appointed, Otho was carried to the prætorian camp, where he was proclaimed by the soldiery, and the officers were hurried away by the torrent. Piso and Galba were murdered in attempting to put a stop to the disturbance; and Otho took a pleasure in looking attentively at their heads besmeared in blood. On the contrary, Galba made use of the following expression, which was worthy of a great man, to a soldier, who was boasting of his having killed Otho. *Pray, who gave you orders?* The proscriptions, and the cruelty which had been exercised by those emperors who succeeded to Augustus, had so entirely extinguished the ancient families, that from the time of Galba, there was not one emperor who was descended from them.

Piso and Galba murdered.

Vitellius proclaimed in Germany. His vices.

At the time that Otho, who had found no difficulty in getting himself acknowledged by the senate, was receiving the usual homage of flattery, the sovereign power was seized by a competitor. Before the murder of Galba, the legions in Germany had proclaimed their commander, Vitellius, emperor, whose infamous conduct during his youth, which was spent in company with Tiberius, would have been sufficient to have rendered him contemptible,

though he had not added new proofs of his worthlessness, gluttony, drunkenness, meanness, and every abject vice. Some of the Gauls had declared in his favour; and his want of abilities to carry on the war, were to be made up by the talents of his generals, Valens and Cecina. Otho, who had the citizens of Rome, the prætorian guards, and many legions on his side, and whose elevation seemed to give scope to his genius, that appeared hitherto to have been sunk in effeminacy, prepared to oppose them.

War forgotten in Rome.

From the time that Augustus had got the whole power into his hands, by means of his address and violence, the art of war was forgotten in Italy. The prætorian guards led an idle licentious life, and their debauchery was increased by the sums continually lavished upon them by the emperors, as the only means of attaching them to their service. The senators and knights were so ignorant of discipline, that their preparations seemed rather fitted for splendid festivals, than the severities of a campaign. The whole city was filled with terror, and the idea of war was only pleasing to those restless spirits, and men of ruined fortunes, who placed their whole hopes in the public calamities. The time was now over, when Rome, though corrupted, still abounded with heroes.

Battle of Bedriacum.

The first hostilities were unfavourable to Vitellius. Cecina was obliged to raise the siege of Placentia, and received a very important check before he was joined by his colleague; and when they met, they despised and mutually reviled one another. Otho was ad-

vised to temporize, which was certainly the best thing he could do in his present circumstances; but tired with suspence, and perhaps dreading that his adherents would cool, he was resolved to venture an engagement; but what was a more surprising fault, he did not appear there in person. He was persuaded by his flatterers to withdraw, while the army fought in his cause. Part of the prætorian guards attended him, but the rest of the army could neither show the same ardour, nor preserve the same discipline in his absence; and, though commanded by two experienced generals, they no longer continued in subjection. At last, the battle fought at Bedriacum, between Mantua and Cremona, was decided in favour of Vitellius, where above forty thousand men fell on both sides. In the civil wars, no advantage was to be gained by taking prisoners, because they were not made slaves, which occasioned more dreadful carnage. The news of the defeat was brought by a soldier, who, finding himself accused of imposture and falsehood, confirmed the intelligence by killing himself at the feet of Otho.

Otho kills himself, after a reign of three months.

The emperor being resolved not to survive a defeat, persisted in his design, notwithstanding the entreaties of his friends and the soldiers, pleading motives of generosity, to which it is not easy to give credit. Like Cato, he gave his last orders with the greatest composure, and employed himself with providing for the safety of his adherents, after which he stabbed himself with his dagger. A number of his soldiers, from affection to his person, put themselves to death. He reigned only three months.

The mildness of his government during that short space, does not prevent our supposing, that if he had got himself once firmly established on the throne, he would have followed the example of Nero, since he was guilty of the same vices. When men are anxious to secure dominion, they make a good beginning; but when they have no dangers to apprehend, give themselves up to every species of wickedness.

Vitellius a brutal tyrant.

In the mean time, Vitellius, who was still less worthy of reigning, received information, according to the usual form, while he was in Gaul, that the senate had conferred upon him the sovereign authority. He immediately passed into Italy, and, without deigning to save appearances, indulged himself in the cruel pleasure of visiting the field of battle, which was still covered with the bodies of the dead. Some of his courtiers nauseating the stench of the carcases; *A dead enemy always smells well*, said he, *but more especially a citizen;* an abominable expression, which conveys every idea of the most horrid barbarity. Rome was now governed by a stupid brutal tyrant, who was always immersed either in wine or blood; whose gluttony swallowed millions; whose palace was daily filled with bacchanalian riots; and whose soldiers, following the example of their master, indulged in every species of debauchery, and spread terror and confusion all round them. To give a perfect idea of him at one stroke, let us add, that he paid extraordinary honour to the memory of Nero.

Vespasian, his rise.

Such a reign could not last long, at a time when the empire was given or taken away at

the pleasure of the army; and Vitellius was very soon threatened by Vespasian. This general, the son of a petty tax-gatherer, had raised himself imperceptibly under Caligula and Claudius, by mean servilities. For the great fortunes even of men of merit, have scarcely ever any other origin in the courts of bad princes. In one word, he rose under the auspices of Narcissus, and, by his means, arrived at the consulship. Though not so fawning during the reign of Nero, whose ridiculous fancies he did not flatter, he obtained the command of the army in the war against the Jews, of which we shall give an account in the sequel. He carried on this war with equal courage and ability, when three sudden revolutions smoothed the way for an enterprise, which he could not have formed but with anxious apprehension, or rather which was formed by other people. The pretended oracles which promised him the empire, and the sacrilegious application of the prophecies concerning our Saviour, which was made to him by Josephus, ought to be reckoned either political stratagems, the artifices of flattery, or the dreams of superstitious credulity.

Vespasian chosen emperor in the East.

The legions which served in the East being jealous at seeing every thing disposed of by the others, were desirous in their turn to choose an emperor; and Vespasian was persuaded by Mucianus, governor of Syria, to seize this opportunity. Being proclaimed by his soldiers in Egypt, Syria, and Judea, he was acknowledged all over the East. Mucianus began his march, and was preceded by Antonius Primus, with the armies of Mæsia, Pannonia, and Dal-

matia. Till he was roused by the noise of war, Vitellius did not wake from his lethargy, when he immediately ordered his generals Cecina and Valens to oppose the enemy; but the first of them was a traitor, and the other a debauchee, whose retinue was a perfect seraglio. Primus gained a battle at the gates of Cremona, which was followed by the taking of the town, when he delivered it up to be plundered without mercy, by his soldiers, and afterwards reduced to ashes.

Stupidity of Vitellius.

Vespasian every where met with the readiest submission, of which the weak Vitellius either was ignorant himself, or wanted to keep the people in ignorance. He continued to live as if the country had been in perfect tranquillity, without abating either in his debaucheries or luxury, lavishly granting privileges and immunities for money, and dissipating his wealth in procuring disgraceful and pernicious pleasures. However, as the danger became pressing, and the soldiers called loudly for the emperor, he went to the camp; but that only served to make him more contemptible; and he very soon quitted it in a panic, which deprived him of all reflection. The inhabitants of Rome, rather affected at the sight of his humiliation, than from attachment to his person, testified great anxiety to serve him; but he knew not how to profit by it.

He concludes a shameful treaty to save his life.

Primus passed the Apennines in the month of December, without meeting any obstruction but what was presented to him by nature. The emperor being reduced to the necessity of dying or resigning, he chose the part best suited to his imbecility, and accepted such terms as

were dictated to him by Flavius Sabinus, præfect of Rome, and eldest brother of Vespasian, obliging himself to resign the empire for a considerable pension, with the liberty of ending his days in peace in the country of Campania. Having concluded the treaty, he went to read it to the people; and, after recommending all his family to them, with tears in his eyes, gave up his sword, and wanted to strip himself of every badge of authority. This melancholy spectacle softened the hearts of the people, and roused them to oppose it. They prevented him from executing his purpose, and compelled him to return to his palace. Sabinus was attacked, and, having lost some of his soldiers, retired to the Capitol, where he was besieged by the German cohorts, who set fire to the gates. The temple of Jupiter was consumed; and, Sabinus being taken prisoner, was dragged to the feet of Vitellius, where he was cut in pieces, notwithstanding the efforts of the emperor to soften the enraged soldiery.

Rome taken by Primus.

All hope of conciliatory measures were then at an end. Primus arrived, and, carrying all before him, took possession of the city, while they were celebrating the foolish licentious festival of the *Saturnalia*. Tacitus tells us, that all the slaughter and horrors of this action did not put a stop to the amusements of the people. This anecdote serves to give an idea of the Romans in their disgraceful humiliation, when debased by universal corruption. Vitellius being surprised in the cell of a slave, where he had concealed himself, became the sport of those very people who had shown such a zealous attachment to him a little before. With a rope

Death of Vitellius.

about his neck, his hands tied behind him, and his robe disgracefully torn, he was brought into the forum as a wicked criminal. He was loaded with reproaches, bespattered with dirt, and put to death by a thousand torments; after which his head was fixed upon a lance, and his body dragged with a hook into the Tiber. What a death for an emperor! Thus we see, that even in the most polished nations, when licentiousness has thrown down all regard for laws and morals, spectacles are sometimes presented to our view, which we could not think possible in ages of the greatest barbarity.

VESPASIAN.

REMARKABLE GOVERNMENT OF VESPASIAN. WAR OF JUDEA, AND TAKING OF JERUSALEM.

VESPASIAN, though absent, was acknowledged emperor. Mucianus, who flattered himself that it was by his means, exercised the whole authority at Rome, and, for some time, this unfortunate city experienced all the cruelties which usually follow conquest. Primus, to whom Vespasian was really indebted for his success, was an object of jealousy in the eyes of the haughty Mucianus, and no longer interfered in public affairs; for, in courts, merit without interest vanishes in an instant. 69. Vespasian acknowledged emperor.

The emperor was waiting in Alexandria for a fair wind to bring him to Rome. The Alexan- Miracles ascribed to him.

drians having declared in his favour from the beginning, expected considerable gratifications, but were disgusted by his economy, which had a tincture of avarice. However, two pretended miracles, mentioned by Tacitus, on the authority of living witnesses, put a stop to their murmurs. Two men, the one blind and the other lame, being inspired by the god Serapis, entreated him to anoint the eyes of the one with his spittle, and to press the hand of the other with his foot. After some reluctance he consented, and the patients were cured.

Explanation of this fact.

The miracles of false religion are commonly ascribed to the interposition of the devil, as if knavery, falsehood, and credulity, could not furnish a more probable explanation. Vespasian either suffered himself to be deceived, or was pleased to deceive others. The evidences mentioned by Tacitus might have been of that kind of men who are always surrounded by wonders, and vouch for them as if they had been eye-witnesses. History affords examples of them in abundance: But the true religion, whose miracles are stamped with the seal of Divine testimony, ought to reject all the fables of superstition and imposture.

70. His good administration.

A prodigy of a different kind was to see Rome, after having been under the tyranny of seven monsters, drenched in blood, at last under the authority of an emperor who was worthy of that name; and Vespasian, who had formerly been the mean flatterer of tyrants, make himself esteemed and respected for every princely quality. Modest, industrious, and constantly attentive to the cares of government, he endeavoured to restore that order in the management

of public affairs, which had been subverted by tyranny and discord. Without flattering their passions, he restored discipline in the army; recovered the ancient lustre of the senate by discarding unworthy members, and giving it a share in the administration; put an end to very great evils, by the prudent administration of justice; by example, which has greater influence than the laws, checked the luxury which prevailed at their tables; and corrected licentious manners by prudent regulations. Without either pride or haughtiness, he showed his sovereignty in nothing so much as in labouring for the good of the public; and it is by such conduct that a monarch deserves his power.

Accused of avarice and extortion.

Yet he has been censured for a passion which even disgraces private life, the love of money. He has likewise been charged with selling offices and pardons; with having increased the taxes, and employing severe avaricious men in collecting the revenues, with a design of squeezing them like sponges, and condemning them when they had amassed considerable fortunes. His son, Titus, having disapproved of a tax upon urine, the emperor presented him with the first sum which was collected from it, and asked him, *If the money had a bad smell?* The apologists for his conduct vindicated him, by saying, that he was compelled to it from the necessity of the times, for the finances were entirely exhausted; and alleged the excellent uses to which he dedicated his revenues; in adorning the city, mending highways, relieving the necessitous, restoring the fortunes of decayed senators, and bestowing splendid rewards upon men of learning and ingenious artists. But it

is impossible to vindicate odious exactions, which rather resemble the extortions of a tax-gatherer than the imposts of a prince. It was not necessary to assign a pension of a hundred thousand sesterces * to the professors of eloquence, nor to bestow a reward of five hundred thousand sesterces † upon a poet, as was done by Vespasian. No imposts should be levied upon the people but what the necessities of the state require.

He banished philosophers.

This prince, though so liberal to poets and orators, banished philosophers, as enemies of monarchy. It must be owned, that, under the mask of Stoicism, a number ran into blameable excesses. Demetrius, a Cynic, had the temerity to continue in Rome, and even to come into the emperor's presence, without showing the least token of respect. Vespasian sent him the following message: *You do what you can to provoke me to put you to death, but I do not kill every dog that barks.*

Banishment of Helvidius Priscus.

However, he banished Helvidius Priscus, the son-in-law and imitator of the virtues of Thrasea, whose only crime was a love of liberty too zealous to be indulged under a monarch. He behaved with more generosity to Metius Pompotianus, who had been represented to him as a dangerous rival. He raised him to the consulship, saying, *If he becomes emperor, he will remember my kindnesses.*

Rebellion of the Batavi and Gauls suppressed.

Two important wars ended happily. The Batavi, led on by Civilis, one of the most distinguished men of that country, had shaken off the Roman yoke. The Gauls, excited by their

* 807*l.* 5*s.* 10*d.* † 4036*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.* English.

druids, and a detestation of slavery, likewise revolted; and their leader, Classicus, having assumed the badges of authority, preceded by lictors, compelled the legions to take the oath of allegiance to the Gallic empire. Seven legions were sent to suppress the rebellion on the Rhine, which was too great a force to be resisted by a people divided among themselves, and therefore the greatest part of them readily submitted; but Civilis continued steady, gaining several advantages, and sustaining some losses, till he saw that the Batavi were tired of such a dangerous war, and then submitted to Cerialis, a man of abilities, sometimes negligent, but almost always fortunate.

State of Judea. Wars against the Jews.

The war against the Jews, the most famous which is recorded in history, was likewise ended this year. That people, who hated and despised every other nation as much as they were universally hated and despised, were in nothing respectable but their being the depositaries of revelation, which, however, did not prevent them from sinking into the grossest superstition; and were too weak and contemptible to act a distinguished part in politics. When they were freed from a tedious captivity, they put themselves under the government of their high-priests. Pompey had subjected them to Rome, after having taken Jerusalem, and put an end to the quarrel between the two brothers, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, who contended for the principality. The cruel Herod, an adherent of Antony, and afterwards protected by Augustus for a long time, bore the title of king; but the tyranny of his son, Archelaus, provoked

Augustus, who banished him, and reduced Judea into a Roman province.

Prejudices of the Jews.

Frequent rebellions, chiefly occasioned by fanaticism, brought the greatest misery upon the Jews. They believed that the whole world was to be subjected to them. Not knowing the true Messiah, who had been foretold by their prophets, and whose mysteries had been accomplished, they daily expected in his stead a deliverer worthy of their stupid prejudices; so that whoever pleased to present himself as such, could easily kindle a rebellion. The Pharisees, resting their power on a heap of superstitions, preserved the fire of enthusiasm, and accused of idolatry all who did not concur in their opinions and religious ceremonies. They looked with horror upon the standards of the legions and the images of the emperors; and their prejudices and national character contributed equally to light up a flame in Judea upon the slightest occasion.

Siege of Jerusalem.

Nero sent Vespasian to reduce that rebellious people. He had completed the conquest of the whole kingdom, except the capital, when, being proclaimed emperor, he followed where fortune led the way, leaving the war to be continued, and Jerusalem taken, by his eldest son Titus. The ruin of that unfortunate city was more owing to the Jews than to the Romans. The Jews, divided among themselves, and inflamed with inveterate hatred against one another, became their own executioners. The most prudent among them were desirous to submit; but a mad faction, who took the name

Excess of the Zealots.

of *Zealots*, obstinately persisted, and tyrannized over their own people, at the very time that

they were provoking the vengeance of the enemy. The city was filled with an innumerable multitude, and rivers of blood were perpetually flowing from their internal dissentions. The Zealots even formed different parties among themselves, and showed greater inveteracy against one another, than against the Romans. To complete all these horrors, they were afflicted by a dreadful famine, in which every thing served for food; and a mother was known to kill her own son, in order to devour him. The fanatics, resting their faith upon false prophets, bid defiance to every suffering, danger, and death. Titus having fruitlessly employed every gentle means to prevail with them to surrender, at last took the place by storm. The temple was given up to the flames, and Jerusalem buried for ever in ruins.

Remarks on the history of Josephus.

The historian, Josephus, who had forsaken his countrymen to serve in the Roman army, reckons eleven hundred thousand Jews to have perished in the course of this siege; but Suetonius and Cornelius Nepos lessen the number almost one half. The history of Josephus bears such evident tokens of flattery, credulity, and exaggeration, that we cannot help refusing to give him credit upon many occasions. Does the man who alleges that he prophesied Vespasian would be emperor, supposing that he was the person meant in the ancient oracles, deserve to be reckoned among the number of good historians?

79. Vespasian's death.

Vespasian, when fifty-nine years of age, sick, and at the point of death, so much were the duties of sovereignty impressed on his mind, attempted to get up in his bed, saying, *that an*

emperor should die standing; and immediately expired. He was sometimes so much above being affected with vulgar prejudices, that he used to laugh at such as would have frightened other people. At sight of a comet, 'If this star threatens any one,' said he, 'it must be the king of Parthia, who has long hair, and not I, who am bald.' Notwithstanding, he believed in astrology and divination.

Numbering the citizens.

The last time the citizens of Rome were numbered was under his reign. It is said that there were eighty one people above a hundred years old, living between the Apennines and the river Po, of whom eight were above a hundred and thirty, and three of a hundred and forty. These facts are greatly to be doubted; they were much more difficult to be ascertained at that time than at present.

TITUS.

79. Titus sacrifices his pleasures to his duty.

At the name of Titus, we find a secret satisfaction rising in our breast, because the *idea* of a good prince is accompanied with that of public felicity. The sole purpose of his reign was to diffuse happiness; and, far from suffering himself to be intoxicated by power, which generally gives a loose to the passions, he sacrificed his own inclinations the moment he found himself responsible for the welfare of the people. He dismissed Berenice, daughter of Agrippa, king of the Jews, with whom he was

distractedly in love; and dismissed her only, that he might not incur the censure of the Romans, by marrying a foreigner. The pleasures of his youth were abandoned for the duties of government; and the desire of doing good became the emperor's ruling passion. *My friends, I have lost a day,* said he, upon recollecting that he had not marked it with any act of beneficence.

Generous economy. Gives public shows.

The favours bestowed upon the courtiers might have proved a burden to the people; the generosity of Titus, therefore, would have been less admirable, had it not been joined with economy, and if, while he gave to a few, he had not been attentive to the interest of all. His maxim, that no subject ought to quit the presence of his sovereign in discontent, is only good in the mouth of a judicious prince, who knows when it is proper to grant, and when to refuse, and can give a denial without provoking resentment. He is commended for having confirmed, without exception, all the donations made by his predecessors; a proceeding for which, with reason, he might perhaps be censured. It was, doubtless, necessary to entertain the people with public diversions; and the stately amphitheatre built by Titus, with the shows there exhibited, were suited to the taste of the Romans, and the grandeur of the empire. But the liberalities he bestowed in the times of public calamity, after the celebrated eruption of Mount Vesuvius, and a dreadful fire in Rome, principally deserved to conciliate the affection of the people.

He put no Roman citizen to death.

Titus, when he assumed the office of pontiff, declared, that in that quality, he thought him-

self under an obligation to abstain from imbruing his hands in Roman blood; and, accordingly, he never shed a drop. He either pardoned criminals, or inflicted only gentle punishments. The savage Domitian, his brother and his enemy, shared his favours. He made two patricians eat at his table, who had been convicted of a conspiracy against him, and condemned to death by the senate. Informers were the only objects of his severity, and he purged society of that nuisance.

81. His death. This great prince, who was styled *the delight of mankind*, and whose virtues have made his exploits be forgotten, died at the age of forty, after a reign of two years; and left the empire to a monster, under whose oppression it was destined long to groan. Such is the deplorable fate of nations.

Eruption of Vesuvius. Death of Pliny The principal event in this reign, was the first eruption of Mount Vesuvius, in which two whole cities, Herculaneum and Pompeii, were afterwards hardened into a solid mass by the melted matter thrown out by the volcano. Pliny, the naturalist, who then commanded the fleet at Misenum, was desirous of observing this dreadful phenomenon nearer; and his curiosity cost him his life. No man ever showed a greater passion for study than he; at table, in the bath, on a journey, and even in the streets of Rome, it employed his attention. Not to mention his original works, he left behind him a hundred and sixty port-folios, filled with extracts from various authors which he had perused. Being persuaded that some utility may be drawn from the worst books, there were none which he did not read, or cause to

be read to him. Accordingly, in the immensity of matter contained in his Natural History, the critics have found ample subject for exercising their talents. Human life would not be sufficient for the examination of such a variety.

DOMITIAN.

81. Domitian, a mixture of folly and cruelty.

In Domitian, brother of Titus, the bad qualities of Caligula and Nero were united. Cruelty and folly were his characteristics. In his chamber he amused himself with killing flies; and to him it was equally a matter of diversion to kill men. He assumed the title of *God*, while he abandoned himself to the most infamous vices; and affected all the military honours, though he only gave marks of the most shameful cowardice. He promulgated some good laws; among others, one prohibiting the making of eunuchs; and sometimes did just and generous actions; but a few instances of dissembled virtue served only to make his vices appear more horrid.

Instances of his malicious disposition.

We may judge of his heart by the barbarous pleasure he once took of assembling the principal senators and knights in a hall hung with black, obliging them to dine amidst all the horrors of death, and dismissing them in dreadful expectation of becoming the victims of his cruelty. After having sufficiently diverted himself with their fears, he consoled them with pre-

sents. An insurrection in Germany, which was soon quelled, furnished the tyrant with an opportunity of giving full vent to his cruelty. Then, if we may believe Tacitus, birth, riches, honours, and, above all, virtues, were converted into crimes. The rewards bestowed upon informers appeared in as odious a light even as their malice; consulships, priesthoods, and the most lucrative governments, were lavished upon those execrable monsters. Slaves were bribed to give evidence against their masters, and, in cases of necessity, friends supplied the place of enemies. Men of the greatest worth were executed on a charge of high treason; the senate was their judge, that is, the involuntary instrument of tyranny.

He banishes the philosophers.

That no trace of virtue might be left, all the philosophers were banished. The two most celebrated among them, Dion Chrysostom and Epictetus, quitted the city without having wherewith to subsist. The emperor did not even spare the fine arts and eloquence, which were less calculated for giving him umbrage. In a word, continues Tacitus, a horrid inquisition shut all ears and mouths; and people would have lost their memory with their speech, had it been as much in their power to forget as it was to be silent. The Christians suffered a persecution, but upon what motives it was raised is not known; profane historians confounding them with the Jews.

96. Domitian assassinated.

Fear, the constant attendant of guilt, ceased not to haunt Domitian, till he underwent the common fate of tyrants. A conspiracy was formed against him, even within the walls of his palace; and the empress directed the

plot, which succeeded. The tyrant was assassinated. The senate ordered his statues to be thrown down; while the army wished to deify him, because he had loaded them with favours.

Agricola. His will.

Agricola, father-in-law of the historian Tacitus, one of the greatest men of his age, reflected honour upon this reign, by his conduct and exploits in Great Britain, of which he had been made governor by Vespasian. By a steady adherence to the rules of sound policy and virtue, an intrepid courage, and admirable prudence, he secured success in all his enterprises. He strengthened the Roman dominion over that part of the island which was already conquered, by governing with humanity and justice, and softening the savage manners of the people, by the introduction of arts and the conveniences of life. He pushed on his conquests during seven successive campaigns; and having defeated the Caledonians, a people in the north of Scotland, would have subdued the whole island, had he not been recalled by Domitian, who was jealous of his glory. Agricola, by a conduct uniformly modest, circumspect, and reserved, found means to escape the misfortunes to which virtue and superior merit were then exposed. He died in peace, and, from motives of policy, made the emperor joint heir with his wife and daughter. Domitian's vanity was flattered by this bequest, which he took for a mark of esteem. *He was so corrupted and blinded by flattery*, says Tacitus, *as not to reflect, that a good father never makes a good prince his heir.*

Account of Apollonius Tyanæus.

We shall finish this article with a brief account of Apollonius Tyanæus, the celebrated

Pythagorean, who played a distinguished part under the preceding emperors, and whom the enemies of Christianity have audaciously compared to Jesus Christ; taking for truth the fables related in his honour by Philostratus, from the papers of one Damis, a weak man, who was a disciple of that philosopher. In fact, he was only an enthusiast, bold, zealous, austere, vain, and capable of imposing on the simple, by pretended prophecies and miracles. After having visited India and Arabia, he came to Rome in the time of Nero, *to see*, as he expressed himself, *what kind of beast a tyrant was.*

His advice to Vespasian.

At Alexandria he had several interviews with Vespasian, to whom he gave some excellent advices, particularly the following: 'Do not enrich yourself by burdening the people with taxes. Gold purchased by the tears of your subjects would be fatal and pernicious. The best use you can make of riches is to relieve the miserable, and preserve to the wealthy their lawful possessions. Make the law your rule, and you will establish good regulations if you be the first to submit to them.'

Accused at Rome.

In the reign of Domitian, being accused by the philosopher Euphrates of magic and rebellion, he had the courage to come to Rome, and, it is pretended, spoke to the tyrant with the greatest freedom, without being punished for it. The writer of his life assures us, that he informed the people at Ephesus of the death of Domitian the day that he was assassinated.

His death.

To complete his impostures, Apollonius resolved to conceal his death from mankind; he

disappeared on a sudden; and it was given out that he had ascended into heaven. The history of his life is the strongest refutation of his pretensions. We there find absurdities which clearly demonstrate the imposture: but credulous and prejudiced minds are not startled at absurdities; and, while Paganism subsisted, Apollonius had the reputation of a man peculiarly favoured by heaven. He was born about the beginning of the Christian era.

NERVA.

NERVA, whom the conspirators made choice of to succeed Domitian, was a venerable old man, of consummate virtue, but timid and weak, either from character, or the effects of old age. Though he governed with gentleness, justice, and even punished the informers of the preceding reign, yet in all these he showed himself too susceptible of impressions from other people. In his conduct, he always gave more marks of pliancy than firmness; which made a man of consular rank say, *It is a misfortune to be ruled by a prince under whom nothing is permitted to any; it is likewise a misfortune, when all things are permitted to all.* However, Tacitus commends Nerva for having found means of reconciling two things previously deemed incompatible, sovereignty and liberty. A good prince, though he may have

96. Nerva a virtuous, but weak emperor.

some blemishes, is always entitled to the homage of good subjects.

He adopts Trajan.

The prætorian guards, who could with difficulty be restrained by severe discipline, soon insulted the weakness of the government. They mutinied, and demanded that the murderers of Domitian should be delivered up to them; nor could they be appeased by the entreaties or remonstrances of the emperor. They beheld him, without emotion, present his throat to their swords, and forced him to comply with their pleasure. After this, Nerva, in order to secure himself, and at the same time provide a support for the empire, adopted Trajan, of all men the most worthy of being the sovereign of the world. He was then carrying on a war in Pannonia, without the most distant thoughts of his elevation to so high a rank. Trajan governed some months in the emperor's name; and had he not been chosen successor, the death of Nerva would have been a great misfortune to the empire.

TRAJAN.

98. Trajan governs with moderation.

TRAJAN, a native of Spain, and son of a person of consular dignity, was master of every accomplishment except learning, the want of which he compensated by his esteem for learned men. A single anecdote will be sufficient to show his principles. On presenting a new captain of the prætorian guards with a sword,

as the badge of investiture, *Use this for me*, said the emperor, *if I govern well; if not, employ it against me.* Looking on himself as the head, not the master of the state, he took an oath to observe the laws. The only mark of distinction between him and the senators, was his superior assiduity and application to business; and he lived among his subjects like a father, whose only aim is to promote the happiness of his children. 'Such as I wished the emperors would be to me when I was a private person, such do I wish to be to private persons, now I am emperor.' This was his maxim; by it he regulated his conduct; and his reign was the reign of justice and beneficence.

Informers checked.

He entirely cleared Rome of those execrable informers who converted every innocent action into a crime. As accusations were authorized by law, there being no public officer appointed for the prosecution of criminals, he increased the severity of the punishments inflicted on calumniators. One of his principal cares was to prevent the extortions of which the collectors of the revenue were guilty, under pretence of zeal for the emperor's interest. *The exchequer*, says Pliny, *whose cause is never bad, but under a good prince was often nonsuited.* A prudent economy and inexhaustible treasure, enabled the emperor to lessen the taxes, without impoverishing the revenue.

Pantomimes abolished and revived.

So well calculated was his example for the reformation of disorders, that the people, of their own accord, demanded the expulsion of the pantomimes or buffoons, whom they had constrained Nerva to recall; such influence has a wise prince, who is the object of love and venera-

tion to his subjects, over the manners of the public, which often refuse to bend to the laws. However, he afterwards restored the pantomimes, as the people could not long bear the want of that entertainment.

Title of Optimus given to Trajan.

Domitian had assumed the title of *God*. The Romans conferred upon Trajan that of *Optimus*, most excellent, which he deserved the more, by subjoining to the prayers annually offered up for his prosperity, this express condition: *If he governs in a manner calculated to promote public and private happiness.*

The Daci subdued.

Nor was he insensible to military glory. Equally qualified for the field and the cabinet, he had an opportunity of signalizing himself in the career of heroes. The Daci, under their king Decebalus, had made themselves formidable to Domitian, who, after marching against them from a motive of ostentation, submitted to become their tributary. Trajan was desirous of wiping out this stain on the Roman name; and the Dacian monarch soon furnished him with reasons for renewing the war; in consequence of which, he refused the tribute, put himself at the head of an army, defeated the Daci, and forced them to submit to humiliating terms of peace. The faithless conduct of Decebalus obliged him to undertake another expedition; and being resolved to make an entire conquest of the country, which bordered on Thrace and Mæsia, he built the famous bridge over the Danube, which, however, was much inferior to the idea given of it by Dion Cassius, as has been proved by count Marsigli. Decebalus was defeated, and laid violent hands on himself; and Dacia be-

Bridge over the Danube. Pillar of Trajan.

came a Roman province, comprehending part of Hungary, Transilvania, Walachia, and Moldavia. Trajan's pillar, which is still standing, is a glorious monument of his triumph over those enemies of the empire.

Trajan would be more an object of admiration, had he not suffered himself to be hurried away by a dangerous passion for conquest. Having passed into Asia, upon some subject of complaint given him by Chosroes, king of Parthia, he spent several years in a war, of which scarce any interesting particulars have come to our knowledge, conquered Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria, crossed the Persian Gulf, and advanced to the ocean, where he cried out, with the ardour of an Alexander, *If I were younger, I would carry the war into India!* But being seized by a distemper, he was obliged to take the road to Rome, leaving the command to Adrian, who could not keep any of his acquisitions. Permanent conquests are sometimes hurtful, because they cost too dear, or stir up too many enemies; what then must those be which cannot be preserved? Conquests in Asia.

Trajan ended his life in Cilicia, after a reign of nineteen years. He is accused of having been too fond of wine; and, it is said, forbid any orders to be executed which he should give after being long at table. He is likewise charged with being addicted to unnatural pleasures. It is an amazing prodigy, that the weaknesses of the man did not injure the duties of the monarch. 117. He dies in Cilicia.

Is it possible that such a prince, whose clemency deserves so high encomiums, can be

Whether Trajan persecuted the Christians.

looked upon as a persecutor of the Christians? It is true, several martyrs are reckoned up who suffered in his reign. But popular commotions, the prejudices of the magistrates, the hatred entertained against the Jews, who were always ready to rebel, the idea of Judaism affixed to the new religion, the severity of the laws, which prohibited the introduction of foreign rites, the assemblies of the faithful taxed with sacrilegious rebellion; all these concurring causes occasioned blood to be spilt in several provinces, though no general edict had been published against them. The letter of Pliny, governor of Bithynia, and Trajan's answer, with regard to the manner in which they were to be treated, are universally known. Pliny charging them only with foolish superstitions, and attesting the goodness of their morals, consults the emperor, and lays before him the gentle methods he had followed, assuring him that numbers of Christians might be brought back to the established religion, if a door was opened for repentance. Trajan approves his conduct; adding, that he is not to search after the Christians; but that, if any of them are brought before his tribunal, and convicted, they are to be punished; a decision which has been severely censured. The fact is, that Trajan and Pliny, being unacquainted with the purity of the Christian religion, which was gaining ground every day, were desirous of stopping its progress, but with as little effusion of blood as possible.

Pliny, Tacitus, Juvenal, and Plutarch.

Pliny the younger, adopted son and nephew of the naturalist, was one of the ornaments of this excellent reign, as well as his friend Taci-

tus, both less distinguished by the honours of the consulship than by their probity, their talents, and their works. *Happy times*, says Tacitus, *when men might think what they would, and speak what they thought!* To this liberty, which, when kept within proper bounds, is so favourable to genius, we owe the masterpieces of the historian, and the excellent sentiments which animate the works of the orator. At that time, too, Juvenal wrote his Satires, in which vice is attacked with great vehemence; but they are destitute of the affecting graces of virtue. Trajan entertained a friendship for the philosophic Plutarch, whom he made consul. That author has converted history into a school of morality, and on that account deserves the highest encomiums.

ADRIAN.

117. Adrian proclaimed by the army.

The sole claim which Adrian had to the empire was a deed of adoption, probably forged, since it was signed only by Plotina, the wife of Trajan, who, though he was his near relation, did not love him. Having got himself proclaimed by his soldiers at Antioch, he wrote to the senate to make an apology for having yielded to the zeal of the army, and preventing them from the exercise of their power. Such a political stratagem showed that he was an ambitious man, more anxious to get possession of the sovereignty than to gain a fair re-

putation. The fine expressions which he frequently repeated, *I shall govern the republic as the property of the people, not my own*, only prove, that he knew how to borrow the language of virtue. Though Adrian had a considerable share of abilities and knowledge, his conduct was equivocal, where the bad, mixed with the good, occasioned the motives of his actions to be doubted. Though we may mistake them, his government in many respects is no less deserving of praise.

He abandons the conquests of Trajan.

After the examples of Trajan, Nerva, and Titus, he at first promised that no senator should be put to death. However, four persons of consular dignity were executed on account of a conspiracy. He declared that it was against his inclination, but he was not believed. The conquests of Trajan being abandoned, the bridge over the Danube destroyed, on pretence of preventing the incursions of the barbarians, and the purchasing a peace with the Sarmatians and Roxalani, inhabitants of Poland, by paying them subsidies, may appear, at the beginning of a reign, as proofs of cowardice; but, however, public tranquillity was a great happiness for the republic. Adrian relieved the people, by giving them a full discharge of all their debts to the exchequer, which were said to amount to no less a sum than nine hundred millions of sesterces; * and likewise distributed sums of money to every citizen. He effaced every unfavourable impression which had been conceived against him, by the condescending attention he showed to the senate, and by ap-

* About £7,856,250 English.

pearing modest, affable, and desirous of gaining the good-will of the people. He even forgave injuries; and when he had got a person in his power, who had reason to dread his resentment, said to him, *Now, you are safe.*

He becomes unjust.

This clemency proceeded probably either from policy or vanity, since it was not consistent with his actions on many occasions. The emperor being jealous of merit, suspicious and distrustful, became unjust to his best friends. Similis, captain of the prætorian guards, being warned by the fate of others, prevented his disgrace, by procuring leave to retire while he was in favour. After seven years peaceable retreat in the country, he ended his life, and, on his deathbed, composed the following very philosophical epitaph, which he gave orders to be inscribed upon his monument, *Here lies Similis, who passed seventy-six years in the world, and lived only seven.* For a common courtier, these would have been seven years of death.

Adrian makes some good laws.

Some excellent edicts, which were passed by Adrian, entitled him to the honourable appellation of legislator. He deprived masters of the power of life and death over their slaves. He affixed some important limitations to that inhuman law which put to death all the slaves of a master who had been assassinated. In a word, he began to reestablish the inestimable rights of nature.

His perpetual edict.

He made a collection of the best decisions from all the annual edicts of the ancient prætors, in which the interpretations of the laws had been too variable, and composed a perpetual edict to serve as a permanent law,

Justice faithfully administered.

He was chiefly attentive to the faithful administration of justice, and the behaviour of governors and magistrates in the provinces, objects of the greatest importance in such extended dominions, where, by their remote situation, injustice conceals itself from the observation of the sovereign, notwithstanding the utmost vigilance.

He supports military discipline.

The same attention was paid to preserve discipline in the army, by the prince himself setting the example. He marched on foot, like Trajan, clothed in heavy armour. Exact, without paying a scrupulous attention to trifles, strict without severity, and generous without profusion, he was adored by the army, while he required the most perfect subordination. Peace and safety were the produce of his attention.

He makes the tour of the empire.

Some long journies which he took from motives of curiosity and political zeal, far from injuring his authority, procured him an opportunity of seeing the state of the provinces with his own eyes, and reforming abuses on the spot. With this view he made an excursion over the whole extent of his vast empire. He built a wall in Great Britain, which reached from the mouth of the river Tyne, across the country to Solway-firth, to protect the southern part of the island from incursions; and his presence was every where useful.

His letter.

A letter which he wrote while he was in Alexandria conveys an idea of the wretched state in which Egypt was at that time. He says, that nothing was to be found there but levity, caprice, and ingratitude. According to his account, the Jews and Christians in that city worshipped no other God but their inte-

rest. The morals of many Christians had undoubtedly been greatly depraved by commerce and the riches of Alexandria. The true disciples of the gospel were but little known.

As to the Jews, they continued as fanatical, seditious, and rebellious as ever; the evils which they had experienced making them only more intractable. A temple, which was erected to Jupiter in Jerusalem, revived their hatred against the Romans, with which they were transported to a degree of madness. There was a worthless robber of the name of Barcochebas, who called himself the Messiah, and persuaded numbers to follow him. They ranged themselves under his standard; and the rebellion rose to such a head, that Adrian recalled Julius Severus, an excellent general, from Great Britain, to send him into Judea. The punishment of the rebels kept pace with their savage fanaticism; and five hundred and eighty thousand Jews were supposed to have perished in three campaigns; the rest were sold and transported to other countries. They were forbidden to set foot again in Jerusalem, which the emperor rebuilt under the name of Ælia Capitolina. Their descendants, who have been scattered over the whole world, have unceasingly detested all other nations, to whom they have always been an object of contempt and insult.

134. Revolt of the Jews. Their dispersion.

A languishing disorder with which Adrian was seized, soured his temper, and made him guilty of some acts of cruelty, in which he put to death a number of illustrious personages. Having no children, he adopted Verus, whose vicious life had made him contemptible; but, happily, he did not long enjoy his good fortune,

138. Adrian dying, adopts Antoninus.

when the adoption of Antoninus wiped away the disgrace of the first choice. No man was more worthy of the throne; and he hesitated some time before he would consent to accept it. Adrian wanted to lay violent hands upon himself, and demanded weapons or poison for that purpose; but Antoninus prevented his attendants from obeying him. After the death of the emperor, Antoninus with difficulty prevailed upon the senate, who were irritated against him, not to annul his edicts, and, according to custom, to rank him among the gods.

Adrian jealous of literary men.

If Adrian's virtues were only affected, he deserved, however, to be reckoned among the number of great princes, for he was the occasion of great happiness to the people. To deep skill in politics, he added a taste for learning and the arts; but men of abilities, whom he admitted to his intimacy, found themselves exposed to his jealousy, and the consequences were hazardous. Favorinus the philosopher, though apt to declare his sentiments with freedom, one day gave up a dispute about a point in grammar, in which the emperor was mistaken. The friends of Favorinus blamed him for his condescension. *You are wrong*, said he; *can the man who has thirty legions under his command be mistaken?* His passion for the infamous Antinous, to whom he dedicated temples, sufficiently proclaims the morals of Adrian.

Florus, Suetonius, Arrian, Epictetus.

Florus, Suetonius, and Arrian, the disciple of Epictetus, a man of rank, and a historian greatly superior to the other two, flourished during the reign of Adrian. From the time of Tacitus, the Roman history is nothing but a mass of ill digested facts. The moral philoso-

phy of Epictetus is more valuable, whose doctrine was reduced to these two points, *Suffer with patience, and enjoy with moderation.* He practised what he taught, and his virtue was tried by misfortunes.

ANTONINUS.

LET us figure to ourselves the throne filled by a true philosopher, adorned with every virtue, and free from every vice; dedicating his whole life to the public good; affecting no marks of superiority; the father of his country, not by a bare title, which has often been prostituted to the worst of emperors, but by actions more honourable than all titles, and we shall have a proper idea of Antoninus, who was a native of Nismes, and descended from an ancient family, though it had but lately risen to eminence. Had his history been written by a Tacitus, his reign, which lasted twenty-two years, would furnish the most excellent lessons of virtue and humanity. But we find only scattered anecdotes, of which it will be sufficient to mention a few. 138. Virtues of Antoninus.

At the beginning of his reign, Antoninus gave a remarkable proof of his clemency, by stopping all inquiry into a conspiracy formed against him. *How unfortunate for me,* cried he, *should it be found that I am hated by a great number of my fellow citizens!* He was not only frugal of the revenue, but looked upon his own Anecdotes which evince his sentiments.

possessions as the property of the state. His wife, Faustina, reproaching him with lavishing his patrimony, in order to save the public money, he replied, *Since we attained to the empire, we have no longer any thing that we can call our own.* These generous sentiments did not prevent him from retrenching several pensions which had been granted on the treasury, without any sufficient reason. *For* said he, *it is shameful and cruel to suffer the republic to be devoured by useless vermin.* So rational a system of economy is unquestionably preferable to the excessive liberality of Titus.

Remarkable laws. Authors mention two wise regulations made by this prince; the first prohibiting any person who had been once acquitted, from being again tried for the same crime; the second abolishing the custom of conveying to the exchequer, or to other families, the succession of a father who was made free of the city of Rome, while his children remained denizens of their native country. Saint Augustine commends a third regulation, by which a husband, who prosecuted his wife for adultery, was subjected to the penalty in these cases inflicted upon women, provided he was convicted of the same crime. But though the guilt be in itself equal on both sides, the consequences to society are not so; and this distinction merits the attention of the legislator.

161. Death of the emperor. Antoninus died universally regretted at the age of seventy-three. During the life of his predecessor, he had adopted Marcus Aurelius and Verus; but being a good judge of merit, he gave his daughter in marriage to the former, who deserved his whole confidence, while Ve-

rus, being entirely addicted to pleasure, was denied any share in the administration; which was in fact naming his successor. He made the name of Antoninus so respectable, that for near a century, the emperors assumed it as a title of honour, like that of Augustus; but few were capable of supporting it in its original lustre.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

From the time that Nerva and Trajan had restored the senate to some share of its dignity, and put an end to the terrors of despotism, the armies ceased to be masters of the empire, and the senate elected, or seemed to elect, the emperor as a first magistrate. We have seen Adrian acknowledge this right, which was but a feeble remain of the ancient liberty. Marcus Aurelius was proclaimed by the senators in conjunction with Verus, his brother by adoption, whom he generously made his colleague. After which they both proceeded to the camp of the prætorian guards, and promised them twenty thousand sesterces * per man; for it would have been dangerous to withhold that gratuity, which was unhappily become an established custom.

161. Marcus Aurelius and Verus elected by the senate.

Thus, two princes shared the power, in order to exercise it in common; and the genero-

The first too generous to the other.

* 161*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.* Sterling.

sity of Marcus Aurelius cannot be too greatly admired, if we consider him as only sacrificing his own advantage in so important a point. But the public good was, in some degree, made the victim of his private disinterestedness. Was it possible that such a man as Verus, a slave to debauchery, destitute of virtue, and void of courage, should be raised to the empire by the most virtuous of princes? Beneficence carried to excess is a fault; and it is the only one with which Marcus Aurelius can be charged.

162. Excesses of Verus.

Hoping that war might disentangle his colleague from the snares of pleasure, he committed to him the care of humbling the Parthians, who had lately invaded Armenia, and defeated a Roman army. Verus set out, but stopped wherever he could find amusement, and at last fixed his residence at Antioch; where, during the four years that the war lasted, he indulged himself in the lowest and most disgraceful pleasures, while his generals were gaining victories for him. He returned, decorated with pompous titles, but degraded by brutal vices, despising his brother's advice, and ready to ruin the state in order to gratify his inclinations. It is said, that he spent six millions of sesterces in one entertainment, though there were only twelve guests; * the presents which he made them in slaves, plate, and carriages, swelled the expense to this enormous sum.

Admirable conduct of Marcus Aurelius.

On the other hand, Marcus Aurelius verified Plato's saying, *The people will be happy when philosophers are their kings, or their kings philosophers.* In the senate he never domineered, but

* L.48,439, 10s. Sterling.

consulted and followed its advices. No senator was more exact in attending the meetings; a strict economist of the public money, he did not think that the soldiers should be rewarded to the prejudice of the people. After a victory, he said to them, *Whatever should be given you above what is your due, would be drawn from the blood of your parents and relations.* On a pressing occasion, when an augmentation of the taxes appeared absolutely necessary, he sold the most valuable furniture of the palace, declaring, that he would repurchase those effects from such as should be willing to part with them, rather than oppress the provinces.

Did not carry his philosophy to extremes.

Though a model of every virtue, and zealous for the interests of morality, he never run into extremes, because he was acquainted with the weaknesses of human nature. *Since it is not in our power to make men such as we could wish them,* said he, wisely, *we must bear with them such as they are, and draw from them all possible advantage.* An excellent maxim, which ought to teach enthusiasts the vanity of their systems of perfection. It was from this principle that Marcus Aurelius conformed to the taste, or rather madness, of the Romans for public diversions; and even the pantomimes, of which he gave some magnificent exhibitions, and honoured them with his presence, though, during the representation, his attention was employed on the affairs of state.

Marches against the Germans. Death of Verus. 169.

Meantime, several German nations, bordering on Pannonia and the Danube, the Quadi, Jazygæ, and, above all, the Marcomanni, threatening the frontiers of the empire, Marcus Aurelius marched against them, accompanied by

Verus; for experience had taught him, that this prince was neither capable of managing the affairs of government or a war, without oppressing the state, or exposing it to misfortune. But his uneasiness for the vices of Verus was soon ended by the sudden death of that prince. Aurelius, unquestionably, felt no great grief upon the occasion; but to suspect, as has been done by some, that he shortened his colleague's days, is the height of absurdity as well as malice. The only thing that could justly be objected against him, is the apotheosis of such a man; but custom had rendered this ridiculous ceremony common.

War in Pannonia. Miracle of the Thundering Legion.

The emperor remained in Pannonia five years, and, during that time, underwent prodigious fatigues, which he could scarce bring his troops to endure by his own example. He gained a celebrated victory over the barbarians, which has been generally looked upon as an instance of the immediate protection of heaven. The Romans were ready to perish for want of water, when a storm rose on a sudden, which furnished them with rain, while it destroyed the enemy with hail and thunder. According to some ecclesiastical authors, the prayers of the *thundering* legion, which, they say, was entirely composed of Christians, wrought this miracle; and Marcus Aurelius acknowledged it in a letter quoted by Tertullian. But as the truth of Christianity doth not depend upon such traditions, we shall not scruple to acknowledge, with those excellent critics, Pagi, Tillemont, &c. the uncertainty of a fact unsupported by any solid proofs. On the Antonine column we see a Jupiter Pluvius giving rain to the soldiers: but would

Marcus Aurelius have confounded the God of the Christians with Jupiter? Besides, it is certain, that the thundering legion bore that name under Trajan, and therefore did not owe it to the gratitude of Marcus Aurelius. To conclude, this letter is no longer extant; and that which is ascribed to him is evidently a forgery. The persecution which the Christians soon after suffered may serve as an additional proof.*

Peace granted to the Germans.

However formidable the Germans might be, they could not resist the efforts of a numerous well disciplined army, invincible under the command of so great an emperor. They, therefore, solicited a peace, which they obtained, and were even permitted to establish colonies in the provinces into which they had attempted to enter by force. That restless and insatiable people only waited an opportunity of seizing upon the whole empire.

175. Revolt of Cassius.

A more dangerous enemy rose against Marcus Aurelius. This was Avidius Cassius, a great captain, who affected the severity of the ancient manners, was a strict disciplinarian, and, after having commanded with success in a war against the Parthians, was employed to revive discipline among the Syrian legions. Under the mask of republican zeal he concealed the most insatiable ambition; and, spreading a false report of the emperor's death, revolted, and caused himself to be proclaimed by his soldiers. Marcus Aurelius, who was then in Pannonia, upon receiving this news, only complained of his ingratitude, and showed himself desirous of victory only to pardon him. But he was not put to

* Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscrip. t. 18.

the necessity of coming to a battle. The rebel was assassinated by two of his officers three months after his revolt. His family and accomplices experienced the emperor's clemency, as he doubtless would have done himself.

The emperor's indulgence of his wife and son.

This good prince, as we have already remarked, sometimes committed faults from a too great mildness of disposition, which bordered upon want of spirit. His wife, Faustina, was a second Messalina; but, instead of divorcing, or obliging her to reform her conduct, he promoted the accomplices of her debaucheries; bestowed on her a title, which had never been known before, styling her *The mother of the camp and the armies!* caused divine honours to be paid to her after her decease, and erected monuments to her memory. His paternal indulgence was carried to the same faulty excess. Though his son, Commodus, was a monster, yet, in order to secure him in the succession, he conferred on him the tribunitial power, and caused him, by an unheard-of innovation, to be declared Augustus. He afterwards drove from the palace those abandoned miscreants by whom the young prince was beset; but recalled them upon his falling, or pretending to fall, into a distemper; and Commodus from that time gave the rein to his passions. The emperor had a son-in-law capable of governing, whom he might have adopted. His successor was not fixed by the form of government, and his paternal affection ought to have given way to the good of the state. No excuse can be found for his conduct in this respect, unless we suppose that his tenderness threw a veil over his son's faults.

This emperor died in Pannonia, to which he had again marched to oppose the Marcomanni. His reign was that of true philosophy, which forms men to the practice of virtue, not to disputation. 'The sect of the Stoics,' says Montesquieu, 'extended itself, and gained credit in the empire. It would seem that human nature made an extraordinary effort to produce this admirable sect, which resembled those vigorous plants that spring up spontaneously in places which heaven never illuminated. . . . . We feel a secret pleasure in speaking of that emperor. We cannot read his life without being interested; and we rise from it with a better opinion of ourselves, because it gives us a better opinion of mankind.' The soul is elevated by the perusal of the maxims written by Marcus Aurelius, as well as by the picture of his life. We there behold a royal philosopher, impressed with the deepest sense of his duties, breathing only the spirit of justice and humanity; despising all vain parade destitute of virtue, which is the true foundation of merit.

180. Death of Marcus Aurelius.

Under such a prince, moral philosophy could not fail to flourish. But as every thing is abused, many persons concealed their passions under the mask of philosophy, and, by their hypocrisy, insinuated themselves into the confidence of a real sage. The ingenious Lucian turned into ridicule the false philosophers as well as the false gods. To him we are indebted for making us acquainted with two celebrated impostors, Peregrinus and Alexander. The first, after a series of crimes, turned Christian, entered into orders, and was imprisoned at Rome, where he was revered by the professors'

Impostors under the cloak of philosophy.

of that religion as a confessor and martyr. Being set at liberty, and afterwards excommunicated, he played the part of a Cynic; insulted every body, made himself an object of universal hatred and contempt, and at last burnt himself, with great solemnity, at the Olympic games, from an imagination that he should make his name as great as that of Hercules. Alexander pretended to be a prophet. For twenty years he deceived the credulous multitude, and sometimes even people of rank. He inveighed with great acrimony against the Christians and Epicureans, whom he represented as atheists, because they endeavoured to bring him into discredit.

Celsus, Empiricus, Apuleius, Galen.

The principal philosophers of this reign are, Celsus, the mortal enemy of Christianity, whose works have been refuted by Origen; Sextus Empiricus, who, by exaggerating the weakness of reason, sunk into Pyrrhonism; Apuleius, an African, who was charged with being a magician, and, by the Pagans, has been compared to Jesus Christ, as was Apollonius *Tyanæus*. To these we may add Galen, the restorer of the physical art, who, by his merit, gained the confidence and esteen of Marcus Aurelius.

The Christians persecuted in Gaul.

We cannot attribute to this prince the violent persecution suffered by the Christians in Gaul, as he published no edict against them; and it is even asserted that he forbade their being molested on account of their religion. But we will see that it was impossible to prevent those storms, if we consider on one side the fanatic zeal of the people and magistrates, and, on the other, the open insults offered to the established religion, to which, perhaps, may be added,

the mutual aversion subsisting between the Christians and philosophers. Christianity was emerging from obscurity, because, among its professors were writers zealous against Paganism, missionaries indefatigable in their labours, and martyrs, whose constancy filled the public with admiration.

COMMODUS.

After some reigns that do honour to our nature, such is the too common propensity of human affairs to sink into degeneracy, that we fall back into all the horrors of tyranny. A succession of two or three virtuous princes is a prodigy, and almost all the rest seem destined to exercise the patience of their subjects. Far from following the example of his father, Commodus had the taste, and trod in the footsteps of Nero. He terminated the war in Germany, by purchasiug a peace from the Barbarians, and made a triumphal entry into Rome with one of his minions in the chariot. Governed by worthless flatterers, and immersed in shameful debauchery, he sported with the lives of his subjects, and, in a short time, made himself so detestable, that his own sister, Lucilla, formed a conspiracy against him. The day on which he was to have been assassinated, Quintianus, a young senator, who was to have struck the first blow, drew forth his dagger, ex-

180. Commodus renders himself odious.

claiming, *The senate sends you this!* but he was so slow in the execution, that he gave time for the guard to seize him, and the conspiracy fell to the ground. Lucilla, with a number of people of distinction, was put to death. The emperor, struck with the expression made use of by Quintianus, conceived an aversion against the senate; and that illustrious body of men, who had been lately freed from slavery by the worthy princes that reigned immediately before Commodus, was oppressed more than ever.

Conspiracy of Perennis discovered.

Perennis, the captain of the prætorian guards, by submitting to the most servile meannesses, and supplanting the ministers appointed by Marcus Aurelius for his son, gained the confidence of Commodus, and governed the state like a tyrant; but still his ambition had a higher object in view, and he hoped to reach the throne by the destruction of his master. A Cynic philosopher, mounting on the stage before a full assembly, and in presence of the emperor, who assisted at the games, boldly revealed the conspiracy of Perennis. The favourite instantly caused the philosopher to be hanged, but that did not prevent the prince from being intimidated; and his suspicions were strengthened by the enemies of the minister. Proofs were found against him; he was declared an enemy to his country; and, being given up to the soldiers, was put to death.

Cleander.

Cleander, a worthless freedman, next gained the ear of the prince to repeat the offences of his predecessor; and a violent sedition was the consequence. Commodus, who was equally timorous and cruel, caused his head to be cut

off in his own presence, as the only means of appeasing the multitude.

Cruelty of the emperor.

The emperor, from that time perpetually tormented with fear and distrust, detesting men of merit, hearkening only to calumny, and committing continual murders, especially on those who had wealth to whet his avarice, caused his brother-in-law, his nephew, his cousin-german, and six persons of consular dignity, to be all executed at once. At the same time, he used his sisters in the most infamous manner; he plunged into every imaginable excess; while his greatest ambition was to drive a chariot, and to distinguish himself among the gladiators. The glory of having defeated a thousand in the course of his reign, so far intoxicated his pride, that he assumed the title of the *Roman Hercules*.

192. The tyrant assassinated by his concubine.

This monster, who was equally despised and detested, never once thought of taking the precaution of other tyrants, and gaining the favour of the people by donatives; but employed all his skill in corrupting his soldiers, by permitting abominable licentiousness. As he spared no body, every one of his domestics was an enemy. He had written a list of those of his family whom he intended for his next sacrifice, which was discovered by accident, almost in the moment of execution. His concubine, Marcia, being among the number of the proscribed, made haste to anticipate his purpose; and, having formed a conspiracy against him, caused the tyrant to be poisoned, and afterwards strangled by a gladiator. The senate and people gave vent to their detestation of his memory. At thirty-one years of

age, he had exhausted every species of villany.

Degeneracy of the Romans.

The Romans must have been strangely corrupted, when the reigns of several worthy emperors could not protect them from such detestable tyranny. Is it possible to conceive, that a prince could be capable of giving himself up to such excesses, as the history of barbarous nations cannot furnish an example of, unless the extreme degeneracy of a servile people had deprived them of principles, morals, and sentiment? It is always their fault when the intoxication of absolute power overleaps every boundary. If there be any thing generous and masculine in the public opinion, it is frequently sufficient to make the laws respected. If virtue and courage be the general characteristics, they still preserve their influence.

PERTINAX. JULIUS DIDIANUS.

193. Pertinax raised to the empire.

Pertinax was in the decline of life, descended from an obscure family, but had raised himself under Marcus Aurelius by his military talents, and the virtues of his life. Justice, integrity, temperance, modesty, zeal for the maintenance of discipline and good order, form his character; the only blemishes in which were, a love of money, and too great a liberality in his promises. Having escaped the tyranny of Commodus, who perhaps despised him on account

of his low birth, of which he had not the weakness to be ashamed, he was raised to the imperial dignity by Lætus, captain of the prætorian guards, and head of the conspiracy against the late emperor, who brought him to the camp, and obliged the soldiers to proclaim him almost against their wills, on a promise of paying them twelve thousand sesterces per man. The senate and people, with transports of joy, recognised a prince whose character was really respectable. In order to discharge the promised donatives, which were unhappily become necessary, he sold all the rich furniture collected by the foolish luxury of Commodus.

His wise government.

In a short time, the government of the Antonini was revived. In three months, the laws resumed their vigour, the debts were discharged, the revenue again put on a good footing, and even funds in reserve for public works. So abundant are the resources of economy, when the expenses attendant on vain parade are retrenched. Pertinax found means to increase the revenue without laying new imposts. He divided the waste lands among whoever pleased to cultivate them; and encouraged the improvers by an exemption from all taxes for ten years. He was convinced, and with reason, that agriculture is an inexhaustible mine, where the prosperity of individuals always conduces to that of the state.

Assassinated by the prætorian guards.

But the prætorian soldiers had contracted too great a relish for the pleasures of licentiousness to submit to discipline with patience. An emperor who attempted a reformation was in their eyes a tyrant; and they were encour-

aged to revolt even by Lætus himself, who had made choice of Pertinax only with a view to gratify his own ambition. They therefore hastened to the palace, and assassinated that great man, who, without making the least resistance, wrapped himself up in his robe, and expired, invoking Jupiter the Avenger. His reign, which lasted only three months, deserves to be immortalized. His death is one of those events which originate from a principle productive of a long series of unavoidable calamities.

The empire sold by auction.

The world then saw an instance of the lengths to which an unbridled soldiery, dead to every sense of shame, can proceed. They had often bestowed the empire for money; they now set it up to auction. Two bidders stood forth, Sulpicianus, the father-in-law of Pertinax, and Didius Julianus, a man of a distinguished family. The last carried it at the price of twenty-five thousand sesterces per man; and fear obliged the senate to confirm this infamous bargain.

Three emperors at the same time.

The moment that Didius mounted the throne, which was thus disgraced, the people, filled with indignation, cast their eyes on Niger, governor of Syria, a general of great reputation, and invited him to avenge and govern the state; upon which, he was proclaimed emperor by his troops, and acknowledged by all the provinces of the East. Had he used diligence, his success would have been infallible and easy; but while he trifled away the time in too great security, a dangerous rival started up, who made the best use of the critical opportunity. The legions of Illyria were commanded by Septi-

mius Severus, a man who, to ambition, joined a superior genius, activity, and address. By bewailing the murder of Pertinax, and affecting a desire to revenge it, he procured himself to be proclaimed emperor, without seeming to desire it. Thus we see three emperors at a time, all whose titles were founded on the nomination of the soldiers.

Severus marched towards Rome, without meeting with any resistance: for Italy was now unacquainted with war; the armies guarding the frontiers of the empire, and the prætorian bands, being rather satellites than soldiers. Didius, struck with consternation, offered to share the sovereignty, and the senate actually made his enemy his colleague; but Severus rejected the offer of divided authority. Didius, being abandoned by the prætorians, who had been gained by his rival, was soon after condemned by the senate, and executed, exclaiming, *What crime have I committed?* This dotard, after having bargained for, and purchased the empire, imagined himself without reproach, because in the sixty-six days of which his reign consisted, he had committed no act of barbarity. It must indeed be acknowledged, that custom often spreads so strong an illusion as to obscure even the clearest truths of morality. By seeing the donatives which, from motives of interest, were lavished by every new emperor on the soldiers, men acquired the habit of looking even upon the imperial dignity as venal. And of what could they be ashamed, when every right appeared to be bestowed by money? If such examples be capable of corrupting entire nations, how dreadful must their

Severus marches to Rome. Didius executed.

infection be on the minds of opulent individuals!

SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS.

193. Septimius Severus breaks the prætorian guards.

SEVERUS was dreaded at Rome, and not without reason. The senate having sent him a deputation from their body, he caused them to be ignominiously searched before they were admitted to his presence. He received them surrounded by his guards; but they were dismissed with marks of his liberality. All the prætorian soldiers who had been concerned in the murder of Pertinax were put to death, and the rest broke and banished from Rome for life; after which, Severus picked out the flower of his legions, and formed from them a new body of guards. This was a prudent step, especially if it had been in his power to eradicate the depravity of the old troops. In the modern history, we shall see more than one prince secure his throne by the same spirited exertion of authority.

His perjury.

The emperor having made his entry at the head of about sixty thousand men, proceeded to the senate, laid before them the motives of his conduct, promised a mild and equitable government, and took an oath to observe the laws. He even proposed that a decree should be passed, prohibiting him from putting any person to death without the consent of the senate, under pain of being declared a public

enemy. But though the principles of arbitrary government or despotism had not yet taken root, the power of the sword easily made the master of the legions master of the state. During the course of his reign, Severus imbrued his hands in the blood of a multitude of senators. What a difference is there between the promises of a Titus, and those of a prince who regulates his conduct solely by his own interest!

194. Niger defeated, and slain in Asia.

Having thus in a short time settled affairs at Rome, he crossed into Asia, where Niger had a considerable party. Three battles gained by his generals, one at Cyzicus, another at Nice in Bithynia, and the third near Nissa in Cilicia, secured to him the possession of the empire. Niger commanded in person at the two last, and at that of Nissa was slain in the flight, after losing twenty thousand men. Severus was not present at any of those engagements. It may be observed, that the Asiatic troops, like the natives of that country, being enervated by the poison of luxury, commonly made but a weak resistance against the European legions, which were better disciplined, and inured to fatigue. Byzantium surrendered at discretion, after a siege of three years, and the victor marked his progress with acts of cruelty, as but too often happens in civil wars.

197. Severus rids himself of Albinus.

His ambition required another victim in the person of Albinus, governor of Britain, who might have been a dangerous rival, and whose attempts he had prevented, by pretending to give him a share in the empire, having conferred on him the title of Cæsar before his departure from Rome. But having now nothing

to fear on the side of Asia, he thought only how to get rid of Albinus; and in order to find a pretence for crushing him, provoked his resentment, by depriving him of the dignity of Cæsar; when that general, seeing his ruin determined, caused himself to be proclaimed emperor, and marched for Italy; but was met by Severus, and being defeated in a decisive battle between Lyons and Trevoux, laid violent hands on himself. The emperor, after insulting his body, sent his head to the senate with a menacing letter, in which he reproached them with a predilection for a rival whom he had made his colleague. Terror then appeared to him preferable to that respect which equity inspires!

Gives himself up to cruelty.

This success was followed by dreadful executions. Far from imitating the conduct of other victorious generals, and burning the papers of Albinus, he examined them with the utmost care, in order to find the names of the disaffected. Twenty-nine, or, according to Spartian, forty-one senators, were sacrificed to his suspicions and revenge; and, perhaps, the divine honours which he caused to be paid to Commodus, were a still greater outrage against that body. But at the same time, he so firmly secured the affections of the populace and the soldiery by shows, profuse donatives, and the unbounded licentiousness in which he indulged them, that he was not afraid to return into Asia to oppose the Parthians, who had put themselves in motion, and passed several years in that country, where he met with some fruitless successes. The Arabians obliged him twice to raise the siege of Atra, a city which had

baffled the arms of Trajan; but none of these expeditions furnish us with any interesting particulars.

With a character similar to that of Tiberius, suspicious, deceitful, and cruel, Severus fell like him, into the snares of flattery, and had another Sejanus. Plautian, who, as well as the emperor, was a native of Africa, had gained an entire ascendancy over him, and insolently abused his power. More master of the state than his sovereign, he put to death whom he pleased, enriched himself by rapine, and displayed all the haughtiness, all the arrogance, of an unprincipled abandoned favourite. An officer of justice being ordered by the emperor to bring an affair before the board, replied, *I cannot, without an order from Plautian.* This minister being raised to the highest honours, captain of the prætorian guards, and consul, married his daughter to Caracalla, eldest son of Severus, and who already bore the title of Augustus. According to Dion Cassius, an eyewitness, but a credulous historian, and of little judgment, though a senator, the presents which he made to his daughter would have been sufficient for fifty queens. Is governed by Plautian.

This honourable match was the cause of his ruin; so near are the grandeurs of ambition to the precipice. Caracalla mortally hated the minister, and no less detested a wife who had been forced upon him. He therefore forged an accusation against Plautian, and found means to make him appear guilty, upon which the emperor sent for his favourite, and gave him a gentle reprimand. The other attempted to justify himself; when the young prince attacked Fall and death of this favourite.

him in a fury, and, having disarmed him; caused him to be put to death by a soldier in the presence of Severus.

208. Vicious disposition of his sons.

By this action, we may judge of the impetuous and savage disposition of Caracalla, between whom and his brother Geta, an irreconcilable hatred had subsisted from their tenderest years. Both of these princes, naturally addicted to every vice, and abandoned to all the excesses of debauchery, were still more corrupted by the domestics of the court, the gladiators and players, who were their only companions. Severus, finding his remonstrances fruitless, and being even unable to gain upon them by punishing their corruptors, which, however, was a step he took too late, conceived hopes of reforming them by the avocations of war. The northern Britons having invaded the Roman province, where they committed great ravages, he embraced that opportunity with the greater ardour, as old age and disease had not weakened his love of glory; and forced his way to the northern extremity of the island, through a thousand difficulties, continually harassed by the barbarians, whom he never could bring to a general engagement. In this expedition, which, though it cost fifty thousand men, gained him only a patch of land, he a little extended the boundaries of the province, and built a new wall between the Friths of Forth and Clyde; but the young Augustuses, for Geta had likewise obtained that title, were neither less vicious nor less enemies to each other than before.

Takes them with him into Great Britain.

Caracalla attempts to assassinate him.

While the emperor was concluding a treaty with the Britons, Caracalla advanced in sight

of the two armies to commit a parricide, but was stopped by loud cries; and Severus having, without any emotion, finished the affair he was about, afterwards sent for his unnatural son to his tent, and presenting him with a sword in the presence of Papinian, captain of the prætorian guards, addressed him in the following words: 'If you are resolved to be your father's murderer, execute your design here; or, if you dare not shed my blood with your own hands, order Papinian to do it. You are his emperor, and he will obey.' However, this pathetic remonstrance had little effect. Next year the unfeeling monster formed another conspiracy to dethrone his father, who punished his accomplices, and again spared his son.

211. Death of Severus.

Severus, who at that time laboured under a fit of sickness, could not bear up under such a weight of afflictions. Finding his death approach, he exclaimed, *I have been all, and all is nothing.* Having called for the urn destined to receive his ashes, he said, at sight of it, *Thou shalt enclose the man whom the world could not contain.* It is added, that having made his children read the dying words of Micipsa to his sons and Jugurtha, he applied to himself these words: *I leave my sons an empire, powerful if they be virtuous, weak if they be vicious.* Yet Dion makes him give the two princes a maxim, breathing the most violent spirit of tyranny: *Enrich the soldiers; do not trouble yourselves about the rest.* This emperor, who died at York in the sixty-sixth year of his age, was a man of great abilities; but his character was a strange mixture of virtues and vices. He

loved learning, and wrote the history of his own life in Latin.

Tertullian and other authors. Decay of Taste.

Under this reign, Tertullian composed his apology for the Christians, against whom the ancient laws were put in force. 'We fill your cities, your towns, your senate, your armies,' says he, 'we leave you only your temples and theatres;' a passage which puts the progress of Christianity out of all doubt. Diogenes Laertius, Philostratus, Solon, and other authors of the same time, as well as Athenæus, who was cotemporary with Commodus, show, by their writings, the general decay of good taste. The period was arrived when genius, destitute of emulation and culture, neglected the good models, and fell into a torpor not far removed from barbarism.

CARACALLA AND GETA. MACRINUS.

211. Caracalla and Geta reign together.

Severus being desirous to admit his eldest son to a share of the empire, who was known by the name Bassianus, made him change it to that of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, a name too respectable to be associated with the idea of a tyrant, and therefore the nickname of Caracalla, is preserved in history. Geta at first reigned jointly with his brother, but notwithstanding a seeming reconciliation, their mutual hatred daily increased; and they were constantly laying snares for each other, till at last

a scheme was formed of dividing the empire, which project we shall see take place in a future period. The elder was to have reigned in the West, and the younger in the East; but their mother, Julia, dissuaded them from an unpopular innovation, which yet was the only means that could have prevented fratricide.

212. Caracalla assassinates his brother.

Caracalla caused his brother to be assassinated even in the arms of his mother Julia, and, flying to the prætorian camp, pleaded his cause with the army, persuading them that what he had done, was only from motives of self-preservation. He bestowed upon them an immense donative, and was proclaimed sole emperor. Surrounded with guards, he went to the senate, where he vindicated himself as well as he could, and consented to his brother's apotheosis, saying, as we are told by Spartian, *That since he was dead, he had no objection to his being made a god.* To gain a character of clemency, he caused all the exiles, guilty or innocent, to be recalled, as if it had been possible to efface the remembrance of so many instances of heinous wickedness which he had committed, and to assume the appearance of clemency, after giving the strongest proofs of unfeeling cruelty.

Murder of Papinian.

The public was soon enabled by facts to judge of the reality of this clemency; for all the friends of Geta were massacred; and, if we may credit Dion, twenty thousand people were involved in the carnage. Many of the most illustrious senators fell by the hand of the executioner, and among the rest Papinian, who had been made captain of the prætorian guards by Severus. Papinian was so respected as a

civilian, that by a law of Valentinian III., his opinion was to be followed in case the judges were divided. The emperor had required of him to make an apology for the murder of Geta, to which Papinian, inspired with virtue and courage, made the following reply: *It is not so easy to justify parricide as to commit it; and it is a second parricide to defame an innocent person after depriving him of life.* A daughter of Marcus Aurelius, his grandson Pompeianus, the son of Pertinax, and a cousin-german of Caracalla, were reckoned among the victims of this cruel tyrant.

He is indifferent about all but the army.

After this, we need not be surprised at any excess committed by Caracalla. The debasing of the coin, rapines, and extortions of all kinds, were but venial trespasses, when compared with the horrid enormities of this reign. The property of the people was devoted to the soldiers, for they were the tyrant's only support. His mother representing to him one day that he had exhausted every means of getting money: *While I have this*, replied he, laying his hand on his sword, *I shall not want money*. He granted the privileges of the city to all the subjects of the empire, because the citizens paid taxes to which the others were not subject; and by this means the Roman people were confounded with all the worthless barbarous inhabitants of the provinces, to gratify the sordid interest of the emperor.

Foolish expeditions of Caracalla.

The military expeditions of Caracalla only serve as proofs of his madness. He had such an enthusiastic regard for the memory of Alexander, that he wanted to have a Macedonian phalanx, and persecuted the Peripatetics out of

hatred to Aristotle, whom he ridiculously supposed to have had a share in the death of that hero. He fancied, that by running over a number of the provinces, not as a general, but as a soldier, or rather by affecting a military life, he was treading the steps of Alexander. He was dreaded and despised by the Gauls, the Germans, the people of Asia and Africa, who were witnesses of his cruelty and cowardice. He purchased a peace with the Germans, and learnt from the Gauls to wear a habit called *Caracalla*, from whence his name was derived. He assumed the surname of Parthicus, without having conquered, or even seen the Parthians. He treacherously massacred the people of Alexandria in revenge for a piece of raillery. The new Alexander was in every thing Caracalla.

217. Macrinus kills him, and takes his place.

He was anxious to get rid of Macrinus, captain of the prætorian guards, a native of Mauritania, who, by assiduity and application, had raised himself from obscurity. Macrinus saw his danger, and prevented it by assassinating the emperor. Concealing his guilt, he caused himself to be proclaimed by the army, and was very soon acknowledged by the senate. Caracalla was equally abhorred by the citizens, and beloved by the soldiers, upon whom he lavished all his treasures. To soften their regret for the loss, Macrinus caused him to be ranked among the gods. Deifying monsters was no longer a novelty!

The usurper contemptible and odious.

The usurper did not long continue to enjoy his good fortune. On the one hand, he made himself contemptible, by bestowing immense sums upon Artabanes king of Parthia, and

giving himself up entirely to the pleasures of Antioch; on the other, he rendered himself odious, from affecting to conceal the meanness of his origin by pride and insolence. In a word, he could not satisfy the soldiers, who had been accustomed to receive immense sums of money as gifts from the emperor, and who obeyed him only upon that condition. It was become an irremediable evil; for they had been long convinced, that, with the sword, they could do every thing, but nothing without it.

218. Heliogabalus proclaimed emperor.

Mæsa, an ambitious woman, sister of the wife of Severus, occasioned the revolution. She introduced her grandson, the young Heliogabalus, priest of the sun, and a relation of Caracalla. She was not ashamed to report, that Heliogabalus was the fruit of her daughter's adultery with that emperor; and, by her liberalities, gained over one of the legions that was encamped near Emesa in Phœnicia, the place of his birth. Heliogabalus was received and proclaimed by this legion; and the troops sent by Macrinus to oppose the rebels joined them. Macrinus himself was defeated, after having declared his rival the enemy of the public. He escaped from Antioch, and, afterwards flying across Asia Minor, was taken and put to death. A scheme of reforming the army drew upon him the hatred of the soldiers.

HELIOGABALUS.

CALIGULA, Nero, and Domitian, seem to have revived in a youth of fourteen, or, rather, Heliogabalus ascended the throne to exceed them all. In his letter to the senate, he assumed all the titles of sovereign authority, which till then had never been done even by the tyrants, without a decree of that body. He proclaimed himself the imitator of Augustus and Marcus Aurelius, while his head was filled only with follies, and his heart was a mixture of infamous wickedness and meanness. 218. Heliogabalus a monster.

Before he quitted Asia, not satisfied with putting to death the most illustrious adherents of Macrinus, he killed with his own hand his governor Gannys, to whom he was chiefly indebted for his success; and placed all his confidence in Eutychien, a worthless buffoon, upon whose head he heaped the first honours of the state. Looking with contempt upon the Roman garb, he substituted silk and embroidery in its stead, and whatever effeminate luxury could conceive that was magnificent and voluptuous. On his arrival at Rome, he introduced his grandmother Mæsa into the senate, where she voted as a member; a singular example in this history. He instituted a female senate to judge of fashions, carriages, and such trifles. Every year he changed his wife: he personated a woman, and was married to a slave, to whom he resign- He assassinates Gannys his governor. Other excesses.

ed his authority, and publicly plunged into such horrid debauchery as is too shocking to mention. If historians have greatly exaggerated, such exaggerations could only have been made of a monster.

His superstitions.

A mad superstition completed the measure of his abominable excesses; and the profane Heliogabalus stript all the temples in favour of the Syrian god, to whom he was high priest, with an intention to introduce the worship of that deity instead of Jupiter himself. He caused the statue of a goddess to be brought from Carthage to marry her to his god; and the nuptials cost him an immense sum. It is said that he sacrificed children to his favourite divinity; that, in honour of him, he submitted to circumcision, and thought the office of high priest to him the greatest possible dignity. In one word, from his fantastical superstition he was looked upon by some people as ridiculous, by others as sacrilegious.

222. He is assassinated.

As it was foreseen that his reign could not be of long duration, he had been obliged to adopt his cousin, Alexianus, known by the name of Alexander Severus. The new Cæsar was very soon the object of his furious malice, and he made several attempts to assassinate him; but the prætorian guards revolted in favour of Alexander, and put to death Heliogabalus, at the age of eighteen, together with his mother Soëmis. He was the thirteenth emperor that died a violent death, and most of his successors ended their days in the same manner; but, however, ambition still continued to aspire to the same honours, and tyranny to provoke human vengeance. We see despotism prevail in

Turkey in these days, but we see no instances of such dreadful reigns. The Turks pay a regard to morals, but the generality of the Romans at that time paid none. We cannot too much insist upon this as one of the chief causes of the happiness or misery of nations. Whoever has a regard for his children or his country, must be sensible, that virtue ought to be the principal object of his attention. May governments learn from history, that, in order to have subjects worthy and capable of serving their country, men must first of all be made virtuous!

ALEXANDER SEVERUS.

222. Alexander begins well.

ALEXANDER, who was only thirteen years of age, from his youth, and the possession of the imperial throne, was more than commonly exposed to seduction; but an excellent disposition, carefully improved, can profit even by vicious examples, and become more zealously attached to a life of virtue. His grandmother Mæsa, and Mamea his mother, preserved him from the snares of flattery, by keeping improper society at a distance. They formed a council for him, consisting of sixteen respectable senators, among whom were the famous civilians Ulpianus and Paulus. The laws were at last to resume their authority, or rather only to have that appearance, for they do not really govern but when they have possession of the hearts of the people.

His virtues. Justice and mercy, moderation and steadiness, liberality and economy, zeal and prudence, with all the virtues of good princes, were to be found in Alexander's government. It is enough to say, that he had that maxim continually before his eyes, which the Christian religion has rendered sacred, *Do unto others that which thou wouldst they should do unto thee.*

Captain of the prætorian guards too powerful. His giving the captains of the prætorian guards a place in the senate was certainly impolitic, for by that means their office, which had already too great influence, added the civil to the military power, and they became judges in the most important causes, either in the name of the prince, or conjointly with him. This change was intended to prevent senators from being judged by knights; and the great merit of Ulpianus, who was at that time captain, made the emperor lose sight of what might be apprehended from the same power devolving upon his successors.

Licentiousness of the prætorian guards. A habit of unbridled licentiousness had put an end to all subordination in the prætorian guards, and every attempt to restore discipline occasioned a mutiny. Ulpianus, the friend and minister of Alexander, was killed in one of these seditions. Dion, the historian, who commanded in Pannonia, from his zeal to affect a reformation, became the next object of their hatred; and they had the insolence to demand his head; but this insult only served to procure him new honours. The emperor made him his colleague in the consulship, but, at the same time, advised him to withdraw, upon which he retired to his native country Bithynia. So much was government fettered by military licentiousness.

A very important revolution, in which Rome was deeply interested, took place about this time, and greatly changed the face of affairs in the East. The Parthian empire, which had been established by Arsaces in the year of Rome 502, notwithstanding the violent shocks which it had sustained from the conquerors of the world, still preserved its independence, and the Parthians might boast their being invincible; but they suddenly disappeared as if they had been swallowed up by another power. Artaxerxes, a Persian hero, animated with the ancient glory of his country, and ambitious to restore the throne of Cyrus to its former splendour, revolted against Artabanes, the last king of Parthia, gained three victories, and at last killed him. He made himself master of the empire of Arsaces, which had subsisted for more than four hundred and seventy-five years, and contained at that time eighteen kingdoms or large provinces. The Persian name once more emerged from that obscurity into which it had been plunged by the vicissitude of human affairs, after having shone conspicuous for ages. Is not this easily accounted for by saying, that the Persians were only the same people with the Parthians, that their courage had been whetted by their wars with Rome; and, at the utmost, it was scarce any thing but a change of name?

Artaxerxes restores the Persian empire.

Artaxerxes, elated with power and success, undertook to make war against the Romans. He claimed Mesopotamia, Syria, and Asia Minor to the Egean sea, as the conquests of Cyrus, and appendages of the Persian empire. It is surprising to see titles which had been

He claims the conquered provinces.

forgotten for ages, revived upon such pretensions; but every title is sufficient in the eyes of ambitious conquerors. Though they are ingenious in finding pretences, is not their real right rested upon force? The Romans scarcely acknowledged a better title; and, at last, the same scourge which they had employed against so many nations, was turned against themselves.

232. Alexander marches to oppose him.

Alexander marched against the Persians; and one of his legions having mutinied, he had the courage to break them for an example to the rest. *Citizens*, cried he, *lay down your arms and retire.* The mutineers obeyed, but in a short time the legion was restored. Attentive to preserve discipline, he always mixed clemency and mildness with its necessary severities. If it had not been for the universal degeneracy which prevailed at that time, his conduct could not have failed of success.

Contradictory accounts.

According to Herodian and all the Eastern writers, Alexander was totally defeated by the Persians, while Lampridius says, that he gained a complete victory. This writer mentions a speech of the emperor to the senate, in which he tells them, that the enemy had seven hundred elephants, eighteen hundred chariots armed with scythes, a hundred and twenty thousand horse, besides other troops, and that the whole were cut in pieces. He declares that he extracted this speech from the registers of the senate. Notwithstanding the contrary evidences, he is generally believed upon his word. But Lampridius, Herodian, Capitolinus, Eutropius, and in general all the writers of the *August* History are so full of blunders, contra-

dictions, and falsehoods, that it is difficult to rely upon any of them; and the present is a remarkable instance of the uncertainty into which we are frequently thrown by bad historians.

War in Germany.

The Germans having begun to lay waste the country of Gaul, the emperor returned to Rome; and after triumphing over the Persians set out for Germany. From the beginning of this unfortunate expedition, he experienced what a slender influence virtue has over the minds of soldiers who are averse from discipline, and accustomed to seditious cabals.

355. Maximin forms a design to dethrone Alexander.

One of the principal officers of the army was Maximin, born in Thrace, of Gothic descent. He had been a shepherd in his youth, but turned soldier in the reign of Severus, and was advanced to the rank of tribune by Heliogabalus. Alexander employed him to discipline the new troops that joined him from Pannonia. His gigantic size, prodigious strength, courage, assiduity, and attention to military duties, altogether contributed to his rise. This barbarian, he still deserves the appellation, even dared to aspire to the throne; fomented that spirit of revolt with which the soldiers were always animated; represented Alexander as a prince void of spirit, under female dominion, for his mother never left him; incited their thirst for those donatives which always attended the accession of a new emperor; and, at last, by their means committed an execrable parricide. The virtuous Alexander was murdered when he was only twenty-six years of age.

Alexander honours great men.

That veneration which Alexander showed for great men of every kind, a certain proof of

merit, was such, that there was a sort of adoration paid to them in his palace. Jesus Christ was honoured there among the sages, but he likewise associated with him Apollonius Tyanæus. One of his principal cares was never to bestow honours upon any but such as he esteemed deserving; and to sell them he thought detestable. *Whoever purchases*, said he, *must likewise sell; and we cannot punish any one for selling, after having given him leave to purchase.* Notwithstanding his clemency, he did not spare robbers of the public, extortioners, nor that kind of court thieves who were called *sellers of smoke.* These last carried on a traffic of their real or pretended credit, and extorted money, sometimes by the hope of favours, and sometimes by a dread of ill offices.

Last civilians and historians.

We now approach that unhappy period when the human mind, without cultivation, without judgment, and deprived of the light of science, will seem to be likewise deprived of reason; the laws ready to sink into a chaos, every thing decided by the sword, and barbarity increased by the success of barbarians. The great civilians disappeared. After Papinian, Ulpian, Paulus, and Modestinus the disciple of Ulpian, jurisprudence with philosophy, and all relish for learning, was eclipsed. Dion Cassius is the last tolerable historian of that time, if we may give the title of historian to a man of a credulous, superstitious temper, who mixes absurd fictions with facts, which he corrupts. A great part of his history is lost, which has been supplied by his epitomizer Xiphilinus, a writer of the eleventh century, but still more ignorant than Dion. We shall give a hasty

sketch of whatever can be interesting in the history of those times of ignorance and confusion.

SUCCESSORS OF ALEXANDER SEVERUS, TO THE ACCESSION OF AURELIAN.

In the course of fifty years following the death of Alexander, there are reckoned more than fifty Cæsars, who, with that title, either lawful or usurped, made their appearance to contend for the imperial throne. Proclaimed, and then murdered by their soldiers, they were the sport of fortune and of cruelty. What was called the Roman empire at that time, as Montesquieu observes, was 'a kind of irregular republic, almost such as the aristocracy of Algiers, where the supreme power being in the hands of the military, they make or unmake, at their pleasure, a chief magistrate, whom they call the Dey; and perhaps it may be regarded as a general rule, that, in some respects, military governments are rather republican than monarchical.' The government established by Augustus, being founded solely on military power, could not fail to degenerate in like manner, when the army, being corrupted, had learnt that they were masters of the empire. Let us always endeavour to trace great revolutions from their source.

Dreadful state of the empire for fifty years.

235. Tyranny of Maximin. Rebellions. Maximin being proclaimed by the army, and acknowledged by the senate, who could do nothing to oppose him, carried to the throne all the natural barbarity of his temper, still more irritated by seeing that the people remembered the lowness of his origin; and his cruelties were immediately followed by conspiracies. Part of the army named another emperor, who was assassinated a few days after. Having gained some victories over the Germans, the Daci, and Sarmatians, his tyranny became more violent; the nobles were massacred, and the people oppressed without mercy.

The two Gordians. At last a rebellion broke out in Africa. Gordian, proconsul of that province, a man of illustrious birth, rich, and universally beloved, was there proclaimed joint emperor with his son. The election was confirmed at Rome, and Maximin declared a public enemy by the senate; but the governor of Numidia, who was an enemy of the Gordians, attacked and destroyed them.

238. Maximin murdered. Maximus and Balbinus were appointed to succeed them by the senate; and the young Gordian was added, as Cæsar, by the people. Maximin, breathing revenge, drew near Italy; but, while he was engaged in the siege of Aquileia, he and his son were murdered by the prætorian guards. He was commonly called a Busiris, or a Cyclop; but these odious names did not sufficiently express the hatred inspired by his tyranny.

Maximus and Balbinus killed. An equitable government began to lessen the public calamities; but the prætorian guards very soon blasted these hopes. Provoked at seeing emperors who were not of their crea-

tion, and dreading the punishment they deserved, they rushed into the palace while the people were at the games, and, seizing Maximus and Balbinus, dragged them through the streets, while they loaded them with blows and insults, and at last put them to death with the greatest barbarity. The emperor's guards, or rather the masters of the empire, no longer performed any other exploits.

To preserve themselves from being punished, they carried off to their camp young Gordian III., then thirteen years of age, an amiable prince, who was readily acknowledged both by senate and people. Eunuchs, and self-interested courtiers, who at first governed in his name, would have brought upon him the popular hatred by their acts of injustice, if he had not chosen an able virtuous minister in the person of Mysitheus, the captain of the prætorian guards, whose daughter he married. In the mean time, Sapor, the successor of Artaxerxes, who inherited his power, and resolved to prosecute his great designs, kindled the war in the East, and seized Mesopotamia. Gordian set out to attack him, and having repulsed him, retook Nisibis, which was at that time the capital of the country; but having lost Mysitheus, the author of his success, he chose in his room Philip, a treacherous ambitious Arab, of the lowest extraction, who, like Maximin, did not hesitate to raise himself by a most atrocious crime.

Mysitheus governs prudently under Gordian III.

The new captain of the prætorian guards was not ashamed to attempt the ruin of his benefactor, and withheld the provisions of the army on purpose to stir up a mutiny. By in-

244. Philip seizes the empire.

sinuating that it was the emperor's fault, and that he was incapable of governing, he wrought so far upon the minds of the people, that they obliged Gordian to receive him as a colleague and tutor; after which, he completed his treachery by causing Gordian to be secretly murdered, and then pretended to respect his memory.

Decius emperor. Philip killed.

One crime always leads to another. Philip was scarcely got back to Rome, after having concluded a peace with Sapor, and thought himself firmly seated on the throne, when the armies in Syria and Mæsia chose two emperors, Jotapian and Marinus, both of whom very soon became the victims of their ambition. The legions in Pannonia and Mæsia next proclaimed Decius, who immediately set out to attack his rival, when Philip and his son were both killed in an action near Verona. Ecclesiastical writers allege that he was a Christian; but it is of little consequence to religion, whether it remain in doubt or be proved. It is of greater importance to morals to observe, that Philip punished with severity whoever were guilty of unnatural crimes. They were so public, and so frequent in Rome, that Alexander durst not prohibit them. A tax was paid into the treasury for the privilege of indulging in such shameful prostitutions.

249. The Goths pass the Danube.

Decius was remarkable for the persecution of the church during his reign. The Christians have represented him as a tyrant, and the Pagans as a prince deserving the highest encomiums. An irruption of the Goths, a people whom we shall have frequent opportunities of

mentioning,* obliged him to arm. Priscus, who was believed to be the emperor's brother, joined these barbarians, and lost his life in attempting to usurp the empire. Gallus, with similar views of ambition, led Decius into an ambuscade, where he was killed by the Goths, after a reign of two years.

Civil wars. Irruptions of the barbarians.

Gallus, in his turn, was killed by his soldiers, fighting against Emilianus, who contended with him for the empire. Emilianus fell in the same manner, marching against his competitor Valerian, who had hitherto been reckoned a worthy man, and a good magistrate, but became a very weak emperor. The barbarians on all sides poured upon the provinces, which were too much exposed to their attempts from what they had suffered by civil wars, the marching of armies, and the confusion which naturally followed such frequent changes of sovereigns. Valerian's generals gained several victories over them in Gaul and Illyria; but swarms of Scythians laid waste Asia Minor, and took Trebizond, Chalcedon, Nice and Nicomedia. Sapor at the same time gained some conquests, and even pillaged Antioch. The emperor marched into that country; and, having lost a battle, sued for a peace. He went to negotiate in person with Sapor, without having taken any precaution; and, being made prisoner, was treated as a slave till his death, after a captivity of at least three years.

* I shall give an account of the Goths, and other barbarous conquerors, when their incursions have more important consequences, and when they are upon the point of establishing themselves in the empire.

260. Noble behaviour of Valerian to Aurelian. The nobleness of his sentiments shines forth in one instance, which deserves to be mentioned, the rather that for a long time we scarcely see any vestige of virtue. He had nominated the famous general Aurelian to be consul, who, being poor, and not in circumstances to treat the people with games, and to defray the customary expenses of that office, Valerian commanded that they should be paid out of the public treasure, and wrote the order in the following terms: *We have named Aurelian consul. By his poverty he is great, greater than any other; but as he is not in a situation to support the expense, you shall give him, &c.* Admirable expressions, but of no effect in a corrupt age!

Reign of his son Gallienus. Gallienus, the son of Valerian, being chosen emperor, far from being desirous of the honour of revenging the ill treatment of his father, and freeing him from prison, ran into every excess of debauchery; while plague, wars, famine, rebellions, contempt of the laws, and other dreadful calamities, set the empire in combustion. The transactions of this reign form a dismal chaos, upon which it would be fruitless to attempt to throw any lights: it was nothing but a continuation of ravages by the barbarians, and insurrections of the army.

Emperors proclaimed in great number. A crowd of rebels assumed the title of emperors. Trebellius reckons no less than thirty; but Crevier reduces them to eighteen. Posthumus, who reigned seven years in Gaul, with all the qualities of a great prince, deserves to be distinguished from the rest. He repulsed the Germans, and, according to custom, was murdered by his soldiers.

Odenatus, prince of Palmyra, or chief of a tribe of Saracens, was still more famous. That hero, attached to the emperor and despised by Sapor, continued, without remission, to fight against the Persians, and carried the terror of his arms even to their capital, Ctesiphon in Assyria. Gallienus created him Augustus, a title of which he shared the honours with his wife, the famous Zenobia; but he unhappily fell a sacrifice to domestic treachery, in which Zenobia was suspected of having acted a part. She governed as *queen of the East*, in the name of her children, assuming all the badges of imperial dignity, and exercising the authority, but without being recognised by Gallienus. Odenatus and Zenobia.

Gallienus was at that time in Illyria, opposing the barbarians, when Aureolus, a Dacian, a worthless insolent man, caused himself to be proclaimed emperor in Italy, and obliged him to return. Marcian and Claudius, two brave officers with whom he left the command of the army, repulsed the Goths or Scythians; for they are equally well known by either name; and having rejoined Gallienus, they conspired against him, and caused him to be assassinated. He rendered himself so execrable by his cruelty and debauchery, that he was loaded with curses by the people, though at the same time his murderers thought proper to procure him the apotheosis. Intoxicated with infamous pleasures, and totally insensible to every thing else, when he was informed that the Egyptians had revolted, he coldly replied, *Very well, cannot we live without the linen of Egypt?* and being told that Gaul was likewise lost, *Is* 268. Gallienus assassinated.

the republic lost because we can have no more stuffs of Arras?

He reduced the senators to the duties of magistracy.

The senators, in particular, were offended with him for having prohibited them from all military authority; an unexampled innovation. However, they were accustomed to prefer the peaceful duties of the magistracy to the dangers inseparable from a military life: And here begins the distinction between the robe and the sword, which had been hitherto unknown. A dread of the senators having too great an influence in the army, occasioned this change; but adventurers, robbers, and barbarians, daily made themselves emperors.

Glorious reign of Claudius.

Claudius, by the use he made of power, showed that he was worthy of the sovereignty; and if his reign had not been too short, he might be compared with Trajan. Aureolus, who maintained his power in Milan, offered terms of peace, which, not being able to obtain, he ventured an engagement, and was killed. Tetricus had possession of Gaul, Spain, and Britain; and the emperor was prevented from turning his arms against him by a dreadful irruption of the Goths. *The war against Tetricus*, said he nobly, *only concerns me; and the other is the war of the state.* Above three hundred thousand of these barbarians having made a fruitless attempt to settle in Asia, had crossed the Hellespont and laid siege to Thessalonica. According to Zonaras, a body of their troops took possession of Athens, and intended to burn all the books in that place, but were dissuaded by one of their number, from a reflection which is more solid than may appear at first sight, though in some respects

false. He alleged that the Greeks, by dedicating their time to reading, neglected the art of war, and therefore were more easy to be conquered. Upon the arrival of Claudius, the Goths withdrew from Thessalonica, when he pursued them to the Danube, where he came up with them, and cut their army in pieces. Few more memorable battles have ever been fought. Claudius died of an infectious distemper at Sirmium, after a reign of three years; by which misfortune, the empire lost an excellent prince, who, had he survived, would perhaps have shared the fate of the tyrants.

AURELIAN.

CLAUDIUS was succeeded by Aurelian, a man already distinguished, and capable of supplying the place of the late emperor, at least in the department of war. He was soon freed from Quintillus, the brother of Claudius, who had been proclaimed by some troops; but was defeated near Placentia by the barbarians, who were much more formidable enemies, and, notwithstanding the opposition they encountered, poured like a deluge into Italy. However, he soon revenged his losses by three victories, which were followed by a peace. Rome being filled with consternation, he undertook to rebuild its walls, and make it a place of strength. He increased its circuit to fifty miles, and his

270. War of Aurelian against the barbarians.

plan was completed by Probus. The war against Zenobia now called him into the East.

272. Zenobia vanquished, and taken prisoner.

This ambitious heroine, politic, chaste, and learned, a pupil of the celebrated Longinus, had seized upon Egypt, and made herself mistress, not only of Cappadocia, but Bithynia, from which there is an easy passage into Europe. Her views extended to the conquest of the whole Roman empire, and her courage equalled her vast ideas. But the superiority of the European to the Asiatic troops was one day to prove her ruin. Aurelian, having driven her from Antioch, and defeated her army at Emesa, pursued and besieged her in Palmyra, a city equally strong and magnificent, and furnished with large magazines of provisions. Having written to Zenobia in an imperious style, he received a very haughty answer. However, after a long siege, the city beginning to feel all the horrors of famine, that princess fled to solicit succours from the Persians, but was taken prisoner on the banks of the Euphrates, and brought to Aurelian, who, in a rage, reproaching her for the insolence with which she had treated the Roman emperors, *I acknowledge you for emperor*, said she, *because you know how to conquer. Gallienus, and those who resembled him, I did not think worthy of the name.*

Death of Longinus.

The victor spared her life, but he put Longinus to death, as author of the letter which she had addressed to him. It is a stain on the glory of this emperor to have dipped his hands in the blood of a philosopher, who is still admired for his treatise on *The Sublime*. Palmyra having again revolted after Aurelian had pass-

ed the Bosphorus, he returned and gave it up to pillage.

Tetricus still reigned in Gaul, but, harassed with perpetual seditions, he sighed for a private station, and, in a manner, threw himself into the arms of Aurelian, submitting at discretion immediately after the beginning of an engagement at Chalons sur Marne, by which the empire was reunited. The triumph of the emperor, as described by Vopiscus, was uncommonly magnificent. Zenobia and Tetricus shone among the prisoners, and both were afterwards treated with clemency. Zenobia lived at Rome as a private lady of quality, and Tetricus had a command in Italy. *It is more glorious*, said Aurelian to him, *to be governor of a small district in Italy, than to reign beyond the Alps.* The state of things is now much altered, and general opinion is no longer the same upon this subject.

The empire subjected to Aurelian.

After so many successes, equally brilliant and rapid, he seemed to forget his former modesty. He had refused his wife a robe of silk, saying, that it was shameful to purchase a piece of stuff for its weight in gold. But he himself began to wear embroidered garments adorned with precious stones. He also assumed the diadem, which no emperor had ventured to do before him; and on his medals we see the titles of *Lord* and *God*.

Elated by his prosperity.

Though naturally prone to severity, he endeavoured to gain the affections of the people by donatives, and changed the ordinary distributions of corn into presents of bread and clothes; to which he would have added wine, had not some person shrewdly remarked, that then nothing would be wanting but to furnish the peo-

Donatives to gain the people.

ple with poultry. These dangerous donatives had been long established from motives of interest and ambition, and their effects were to make the people craving, lazy, and insolent. A good government will find employment for the poor, not suffer them to languish in idleness. It was a saying of Aurelian, *Nothing so good humoured as the people after a hearty meal.* But that very people grew furious when their caprices were not satisfied, and they insisted upon being supported at the public expense, without doing any thing useful to the state, which was an inexhaustible source of disorders.

Good government in other respects.

While Aurelian thus courted the populace, he did not neglect the affairs of government. Order and justice were maintained, and crimes severely punished; he did not spare those unfeeling men, who, under pretence of zeal for the increase of the revenue, oppressed the people. He caused his own slaves to be tried before the ordinary courts, and made wise regulations against abuses. He is censured as being too severe; but if we examine his conduct, and reflect on the moderation with which he treated his enemies, we shall find that this reproach is less owing to real cruelty than the licentiousness of his age.

Orleans and Dijon built by Aurelian.

After a second visit to Gaul, where he rebuilt the ancient town of Genabum, which, from his own name, he called *Aurelianum*, Orleans, and founded Dijon; from motives of prudence he abandoned Dacia, a conquest of Trajan, situated to the north of the Danube, transporting the inhabitants into Mæsia, and made that river the boundary of the empire. Having resolved to revenge on the Persians the injuries receiv-

ed from Sapor, he had marched into Thrace, and was ready to pass the Bosphorus, when he was assassinated, in consequence of a conspiracy formed against him by one of his secretaries, Mnestheus, who, having fallen under the emperor's suspicion, was afraid of being punished. The death of this hero excited the anger of the soldiers against the murderers; and a temple was erected to him upon the spot where he fell.

275. He is assassinated.

TACITUS. PROBUS. CARUS AND HIS SONS. DIOCLESIAN.

WHETHER the victories and firmness of Aurelian had impressed a dread upon ambitious minds, or the army had learned in his reign to keep within the bounds of their duty; or rather none of the competitors could gain their suffrages, and the principal officers had engaged in an odious conspiracy, they, by a kind of prodigy, referred the election of an emperor to the senate, which, unquestionably, from timidity, referred back the choice to the army. More than six months elapsed while three messages of the same kind passed between them, and no usurper started up. At last the senate pitched upon Tacitus, one of their own body, a man advanced in years, and eminent for his virtues, who, with reluctance, accepted so dangerous a station.

Election of an emperor.

Virtuous reign of Tacitus.

The first care of this prince was to restore the senate to its ancient dignity. He gave it the privilege of receiving ambassadors, of making laws, of naming proconsuls, of judging without appeal, and looked upon it as the arbiter of peace and war. This body hoped that the change would be lasting; so prone are societies, as well as individuals, to feed themselves with delusive hopes. Tacitus having solicited the consulship for his brother, and meeting with a repulse from the senators, instead of complaining, said, with an air of satisfaction, *They know what prince they have made choice of.*

His respect for Tacitus the historian.

He ordered all the libraries to be provided with the works of the great historian whose name he bore, and whose kindred he thought an honour. This was not vanity, but the zeal of a good prince, because nothing can be better calculated than such works to inspire a horror for vice and tyranny. He erected a temple to the *Deified Emperors*, in which honours were to be paid to the memory of princes really estimable; upon which occasion, it was wittily and justly observed, that all their *names* might be engraved on the stone of a ring.

276. He is assassinated.

During the interregnum, the Goths, or Scythians, had overrun Asia; but the emperor marched in person and dispersed them. Unluckily he had committed the administration to one of his relations, unworthy of that trust, who was murdered for his acts of violence; and the murderers thinking that they could not escape punishment but by the commission of a blacker crime, destroyed Tacitus himself, notwithstanding his virtues.

Succeeded by Probus.

The troops soon showed that their deference to the senate after the death of Aurelian, was the effect of circumstances, not real moderation. Two armies chose two emperors, FLORIANUS, brother of Tacitus, and PROBUS, a man of uncommon merit, descended of an obscure family in Pannonia, but worthy of succeeding the Trajans. *Reflect maturely*, said he, to the soldiers, *you will be discontented with your choice; I cannot flatter you.* But they paid no regard to his remonstrances; and soon after, the army of Florianus repenting that they had preferred him to so great a man, murdered him, and eagerly submitted to Probus.

The senate respected.

Probus then wrote to the senate in respectful terms, laying before them the state of affairs; and added, 'It is your business to judge whether I be worthy of the empire. I request you to regulate that matter as you shall think most proper.' Being without difficulty acknowledged by the senate, he followed the example of Tacitus, and left them the absolute direction in civil matters, contenting himself with little more than the command of the army.

The Germans driven out of Gaul.

After the death of Aurelian, a deluge of barbarians issuing from Germany, Franks, Burgundians, and Vandals, filled Gaul with blood and devastation, but were driven out by this emperor, who imposed on them very hard conditions, obliged them to give hostages, subjected them to a tribute, carried off their cattle, and set apart sixteen thousand of their young men, whom he distributed among the different armies and provinces. It was a rule of his policy to draw succours from the barbarians,

Provided they may be felt, not seen; but thus these nations were taught the military art.

Absurdity of Zosimus.

Let us remark, by the by, an absurdity in Zosimus, a Greek historian, cotemporary with Theodosius. According to him, the Romans being in want of provisions, there fell a shower of wheat, mixed with water, which furnished them with a sufficient supply of bread. The farther we remove from the learned ages, the more is history disfigured by fables.

282. Probus murdered.

Probus was incessantly employed, sometimes in Europe, sometimes in Asia, in repulsing the barbarians, or extinguishing revolts; and three or four usurpers having fallen in their attempts, peace was every where restored; during which, the soldiers were employed in useful works; but their mutinous spirit was not quelled. The emperor obliging them to dig a canal, and drain some marshes near Sirmium, the place of his nativity, they killed him in a sedition. To him France, Spain, and Hungary, are indebted for their vines. Domitian had forbid them to be planted, but Probus granted these three nations this privilege. Nature sometimes seems only to wait for a good law, in order to produce treasures.

Carus reigns a short time.

The army bestowed the empire on CARUS, captain of the prætorian guards, a native of Narbonne, who wrote to the senate in the following terms: 'It ought to give you pleasure, that a member of your order and a denizen of your city has been made emperor. We shall endeavour to appear more worthy of your esteem than foreigners.' In fact, Claudius, Aurelian and Probus, who were Illyrians, were not looked upon as Romans; but this circum-

stance only heightened their merit; and it would have been a great deal in Carus to equal them. However, he had not time. After defeating the Sarmatians, and vigorously urging the Persians, he was found dead in his tent, being either struck with lightning, as was vulgarly reported, or, as was more probably conjectured, murdered by Aper, captain of the guards.

284. Dioclesian promoted to the empire.

CARINUS and NUMERIANUS, his two sons, on both of whom he had bestowed the title of Augustus, succeeded him without election. The second died almost immediately after; and Aper was suspected of a new murder. DIOCLESIAN being elected emperor, killed him with his own hand, in sight of the army. It is said, that a druidess prophesied, that Dioclesian should be raised to the empire after killing a boar; and he now thought the oracle verified, because of the signification of the Latin word *aper*. The enormous vices of Carinus certainly were of more service to Dioclesian than this ridiculous prophesy. Carinus gave him battle in upper Mæsia, and would have gained a complete victory, had not the officers whose wives he had debauched, seized that opportunity of revenging the injury, by assassinating him.

DIOCLESIAN AND MAXIMIAN. CONSTANTIUS CHLORUS AND GALERIUS.

Character of Dioclesian.

DIOCLESIAN was a native of Dalmatia, and, according to some authors, had been the slave and freedman of a senator, from which low station he rose by his merit. Under Numerianus, he bore the office of *Count of the domestics*, the emperor's household troops; for the prætorian guards, so formidable by their continual revolts, now served only in the army, or guarded the outside of the palace. To military talents, Dioclesian added genius, policy, and virtue. His actions will enable us to judge whether the reproach of tyranny, cast upon him by the ecclesiastical writers, be not chargeable with partiality, and whether there be as much justice as zeal in their invectives against him. In the beginning of his reign, he gave a remarkable proof of moderation; for though victorious, and all powerful, after a civil war, he did not deprive a single person who had favoured the party opposed to him of their life, property, or honours.

286. He takes Maximian for his colleague.

As the empire was attacked and pressed on all sides in the East and West, Dioclesian thought it necessary to procure an assistant for its defence; and, for this purpose, chose Maximian, a Pannonian of obscure birth, but an able captain, notwithstanding the fero-

city of his character. A colleague of this stamp was not dreaded by the emperor, whose prudence enabled him to direct and curb that impetuous disposition. Maximian drove out of Gaul those barbarous Germans, who were incessantly renewing their incursions; and Diocle-sian was no less successful against the Persians and barbarous nations.

He creates two Cæsars.

But new dangers again springing up after victories, that the enemies might be repulsed, and the seditious curbed, he took the resolution of naming two Cæsars, who should each command an army, with the right of succession to the empire; and this title was bestowed on Constantius Chlorus, and Galerius; the first grand-nephew of Claudius II., a man estimable for his personal qualities; the other a Dacian, of low birth, and endowed with no virtue but courage. To the first were assigned the provinces of Gaul, Spain, and Britain; to the second Illyria, Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece. The emperors, without making a division of the empire, which seemed to remain still one body with two heads, shared between them the inspection of the provinces; Maximian governing the West, and Dioclesian the East.

Bad effects of this system of government.

Though this new system had its advantages in the present circumstances, yet it produced the most pernicious effects. Not to mention the jealousy and discords almost unavoidable among several princes of equal rank, the sovereign authority was weakened by being divided. The body was no longer directed by a single head, nor the provinces accustomed to look upon themselves as parts of one great

whole. Besides, every prince had his particular court, and his set of officers, supported at the public expense, which multiplied the taxes, and exhausted the treasury. Lactantius says, in his hyperbolical style, that more people received money from the treasury than paid into it. Though we considerably lessen his calculation, we still find sufficient reason to tremble for the subjects. Thus, when public evils are come to an extremity, the remedy is often productive of new mischief.

Hot baths and other buildings of Dioclesian.

The magnificence of Dioclesian, and his passion for building, were another source of expense. His hot baths, the remains of which are still to be seen at Rome, and which are compared by Ammianus to a province, actually surpass ordinary towns in extent. Nicomedia, his common place of residence, vied with Rome in the stateliness of its buildings. But the revenue would have been much better employed in supplying the exigencies of the empire.

Successful administration.

Yet the administration was every where successful. Julian and Achillæus, two usurpers, were overthrown. It is true, Dioclesian abandoned a vast territory in Egypt above the city Elephantina, but its revenue was not sufficient to defray the expense of the garrisons. Constantius Chlorus subdued Britain, where Cavalcarus, and afterwards Allectus, had usurped the title of Augustus; retook the country of the Batavi from the Franks; rebuilt a great number of towns, and again established the celebrated school at Autun, the care of which he committed to Eumenius, an able orator, whom he attached to his person by the gift of

an office, and a salary of six hundred thousand sesterces. *

On the other side, Narses, king of Persia, and grandson of Sapor, was totally routed by Galerius, after having been victorious in several engagements, and sued for peace, which he accepted on the terms prescribed to him. The Romans kept possession of Mesopotamia, and the Tigris was made their frontier. This peace lasted forty years. According to Aurelius Victor, Dioclesian might have made an easy conquest of the whole Persian dominions. But what would he have gained by it? The empire was already too extensive. A prudent monarch ought never to think of enlarging his dominions, when he can scarce defend those of which he is already possessed. Dioclesian, by preserving his own territories, and procuring them the happy enjoyment of lasting tranquillity, did more than if he had made extensive conquests.

Peace with the Persians.

He had reigned eighteen years, always successful in his enterprises, respected by his colleague and the two Cæsars; universally obeyed, and observing in his government a happy mixture of firmness and clemency. Far from persecuting the Christians, he showed himself their protector. Long tranquillity had cooled their primitive fervour, which diminished in proportion as their holy religion met with fewer obstacles to its progress. They built spacious churches, where the true God was publicly worshipped. 'But,' says Eusebius, 'envy, ambition, hypocrisy, crept in amongst us:

The Christians begin to be corrupted.

* L.4845: 15s.

we fought against one another, if not with arms, at least by discourses and writings; even the pastors indulged themselves in quarrels and mutual animosities, disputing the first places in the churches, as if they had been secular principalities.' This evidence sufficiently proves that a storm might be raised against the church by the ill conduct of Christians; and that we ought not to be surprised at meeting even in ecclesiastical history with so many transactions hurtful to religion.

303. Edict against them torn by a zealot.

Galerius bore an undistinguishing hatred against all Christians, not only from motives of cruelty, but superstition; and calumniated them to the emperor, though at first without the success he wished. A great council being assembled, though the voices were unanimous against them, yet Diocletian refused to issue an edict for putting them to death: Yet he carried things to an excess of severity, ordering the churches to be demolished, the sacred books to be burnt, every man of rank who professed that religion to be deprived of his offices, those in lower stations of their franchises, and, lastly, made them incapable of carrying on an action against any person whatever in the courts of justice. This edict was publicly torn in pieces by a Christian, who was punished with death. By a second edict, the magistrates were ordered to imprison the bishops and priests, who were charged with inflaming the zeal of the populace.

Account of the persecution by Lactantius.

If we may believe Lactantius, Galerius, in order to provoke the emperor, caused the palace to be set on fire, and accused the Christians as being the authors of it. But Constan-

fine, who was upon the spot, says, in a discourse handed down to us by Eusebius, that it was caused by lightning. Such an authority ought to be followed by historians, in preference to that of Lactantius, whose work on persecution was purposely written to show, that they who are guilty of that crime meet with divine punishment even in this life. Profane historians here failing us, we have no opportunity of comparing testimonies and relations; only it appears an undoubted fact, that this, which was the tenth general persecution, is less to be ascribed to Diocletian, than to the cruelty of Galerius, and the fanaticism of the magistrates or people.

It made many apostates.

According to Eusebius, great numbers apostatized, which served to throw additional lustre on the glory of the martyrs. In vain did the enemies of religion attempt to triumph over her by the infliction of punishments; for these attach more strongly to the truth those souls which aspire to eternal rewards. Every real Christian eagerly desired the crown of martyrdom.

Diocletian disgusted with Rome.

Diocletian now paid a visit to Rome for the second time since his accession to the empire, and, in conjunction with his colleague, celebrated a triumph over all the vanquished nations. The Romans expected magnificent games and boundless profusion, to which they were but too much accustomed; but were disappointed by his economy. *Games celebrated under the inspection of the censor*, he said, *ought to be modest;* and this modesty, which the people were incapable of relishing, they converted into a subject for murmurs and sarcasms; the

emperor therefore abruptly quitted a city which he detested. As he set out in the month of December, the severity of the season, and the length of the journey, threw him into a languishing distemper, of which he never perfectly recovered, and which unquestionably contributed to make him lose all relish for his high fortune.

305. Dioclesian and Maximian abdicate the sovereignty.

The disgust he conceived against grandeur, and the cares of government, together with the importunate solicitations of the ambitious Galerius, determined him to abdicate the imperial dignity, in which he was imitated by Maximian. The two emperors yielded up the supreme power to the two Cæsars, who from that time assumed the title of Augustus; and, in order to keep up the same form of government, named two new Cæsars, Maximian, the nephew of Galerius, and Severus; two men unworthy of that high rank, whether we consider their birth or their character. It was to Galerius that they owed their promotion; for though Maxentius, son of Maximian and Constantine, son of Constantius Chlorus, in every respect deserved the preference, yet he chose to have such as were entirely at his devotion, and sacrificed the public good to his own ambition.

He lives happily in solitude.

To behold Dioclesian, after a glorious reign of twenty years, in his retirement at Salone, the place of his nativity, cultivating his garden, and congratulating himself on his happiness, is a spectacle interesting to mankind. When his friends wrote to him to reascend the throne; *If you did but see*, replied he, *the pulse which I raise with my own hands, you would never speak to me of the empire.*

His reflections on government.

The description of the difficulties and dangers attendant upon supreme power, which is attributed to him by Vopiscus, and quoted by Crevier, proves how well he knew, and how attentive he was to avoid them. 'Nothing,' says he, 'is more difficult than to govern with prudence. Four or five men join together, and form a cabal on purpose to deceive the prince; they direct his judgment; while shut up in his palace he sees not the truth, nor knows any thing but from their report; he confers offices on the unworthy, and displaces those who deserve his confidence; in a word, a good and virtuous prince is sold by traitors.' Happily for the world, men truly great can avoid the snares of adulation, and place their confidence with discernment.

Unequal division of the empire.

Constantius Chlorus being as much distinguished for his justice, affability, and beneficence, as Galerius for ambition and cruelty, it was impossible that an union could subsist between the two emperors; they therefore divided the empire, in order to govern their respective dominions separately; but the shares were far from being equal. Severus, who, by his dignity of Cæsar, was to govern as lieutenant of Constantius, acted only as the creature of Galerius, who was not only master of Asia, Illyria, and Thrace, but likewise of Italy and Africa, the department of Severus, and of the East from Mount Amanus in Cilicia to the extremities of Egypt, which made the government of Maximin.

Constantius dies at York.

While he was exercising his tyranny over those vast regions, Spain, Gaul, and Britain, tasted the sweets of an equitable government,

As the only aim of Constantius was to make his subjects happy, far from enriching himself by oppressive impositions, or impoverishing them by his luxury, he even borrowed plate from his own friends when he gave great entertainments; employing his money only for the public good, and possessing no treasure but the hearts of the people. Accordingly, upon the least signal, they were eager to offer him all that was in their power to bestow. This excellent prince died at York, on his return from a successful expedition against the Picts. His son Constantine, whom we shall soon see filling the throne with splendour, having escaped from Nicomedia, where Dioclesian had kept him as a hostage, and Galerius intended to confine him as a prisoner, was named by his father on his deathbed sole successor to his dominions, and immediately proclaimed by the army.

Authors of the August History.

In the time of Dioclesian, lived the authors of the *August* history, Capitolinus, Lampridius, Trebellius, Spartian, and Vopiscus, whose wretched compositions, though necessary, for want of better, are the more unfit for a body of connected history, as they contradict each other, and none of them is entirely consistent with himself. We have already observed, that good taste, together with truth, had already vanished.

Plotinus and Porphyry.

The Platonic philosophy had again been brought into repute by Plotinus, who, in the time of Gallienus, solicited permission to build a city in Campania, in order there to realize the system of Plato's republic: but he ought rather to have pitched upon a desert far from any communication with the rest of mankind;

and even then his scheme could not have succeeded, for his philosophers would have degenerated into men. His disciple, Porphyry, flourished at Rome under Dioclesian, and was one of the most dangerous opponents Christianity ever had. When Constantine signalized his zeal for the true religion, he suppressed Porphyry's work against it, of which we only have a few fragments preserved by the fathers, by whom it was refuted.

Later Platonists.

The idle dreams of the later Platonists, the fantastic beings with which they filled the world, and the superstitious mysteries by which they pretended to unite themselves with the Deity himself, seem only proper to disgust men of solid sense. However, the taste for Platonism spread even among the Christians, where it gave birth to an abstruse captious subtilty, whence originated a multitude of opinions equally pernicious to the good of the church, and the tranquillity of the state. The Platonists formed a mystic theology, in order to disguise the shocking and absurd doctrines of Paganism; and it is to be feared that the Christians, studying their philosophy in order to combat them, adopted some of their ideas, and corrupted the noble simplicity of the Evangelic faith, by an ostentatious display of vain science.

ELEVENTH EPOCH.

THE SEAT OF THE EMPIRE TRANSFERRED TO CONSTANTINOPLE, AND CHRISTIANITY ESTABLISHED.

CONSTANTINE.

CHAPTER I.

BEGINNING OF THE REIGN OF CONSTANTINE. HIS CONVERSION. THE DEFEAT OF MAXENTIUS.

Birth of Constantine.

WHETHER Constantine the Great was a native of Bithynia or of Britain, or, which is more probable, of Naissa in Dardania; whether his mother Helena was of high or low extraction, the wife or concubine of Constantius Chlorus, are problems of history where the disputants lose themselves in the dark. If we confine ourselves to what is true and useful, we will here find ample food for our curiosity. Our attention will be fixed by a new arrangement of affairs; a new capital, a new religion, a new system of policy. We shall meet with fewer remarkable crimes, less blood spilt, fewer violent and sudden revolutions, but more intrigues, treachery, and deep villany; we shall see the church triumphant over idolatry, torn by intestine quarrels; the empire still supporting itself by its own weight, though on every side nod-

ding to its fall: such are the principal objects presented by the age of Constantine, and which make it one of the most remarkable epochs in history. The truth is, in some degree, clouded by the frequent contradictions between the Christian and Heathen authors; but let us form our judgment by undoubted facts, and not by panegyrics or satires; thus shall we acquire knowledge worth our labour.

Constantine was about thirty-two years of age at his father's death. His majestic person gave additional lustre to the great qualities of his heart and head. His courage was roused by ambition; and bravery, joined with prudence, conducted the projects formed by his desire of power. Galerius dreaded him, and therefore refused him the title of Cæsar, which he conferred on Severus. 306. Quarrels among the Roman princes.

The latter found at first a rival in Maxentius, son of Maximian, who was proclaimed emperor by the city of Rome and the army; but, being incapable of supporting himself by his own strength, he invited his father to resume the imperial dignity. Maximian, who regretted the loss of his authority, embraced the proposal, after having in vain solicited Dioclesian to take the same step; but he still preferred the culture of his garden; either from an unwillingness to renounce the happiness of retirement, or from not seeing any probability of restoring tranquillity to the empire. Severus, betrayed by his army, which had been corrupted, was in a short time obliged to open his veins. Maximian resumes the title of emperor.

Mean while, Maximian dreaded that he would soon be overwhelmed by the power of Galerius. He, therefore, retired into Gaul, where he united Tries to depose his son Maxentius.

Constantine to his interest, by giving him his daughter in marriage. The arrival of Galerius immediately followed these transactions. Maxentius employed treachery against this rival, and seduced great part of his troops, but lost the opportunity of securing his person; and Galerius made his escape. Maximian laid hold of this pretence to attempt the deposition of his son, but failed in the enterprise, and was obliged to fly from Rome. Enraged to madness at his want of success, he returned to Constantine, and used every effort to engage him in the war; but not being able to succeed, he joined Galerius himself, with a view, as he said, of giving peace to the empire, or, more probably, with a design to raise himself again by some new act of treachery.

310. Attempts the life of Constantine.

One Licinius, a Dacian, of obscure birth, vicious character, and barbarous manners, without any merit, except his skill in war, was named Augustus, in the room of Severus, by Galerius, in presence of Maximian and Diocletian, who constantly refused to reascend the throne. Maximin, the *Cæsar*, enraged at this choice, assumed the title of Augustus by his own authority. The scene was perpetually changing. Maximian having quarrelled with Galerius, returned to Constantine in Gaul, where, in recompense for the favours he had received, he plotted against his benefactor. Pursued, taken, and again treated with clemency, he attempted the life of that prince, who, at last, forced him to strangle himself, and caused his statues to be thrown down. The old emperor, who was an enemy to repose, to his son, to his son-in-law,

and himself, had several times quitted and resumed the purple.

The following year Galerius died. The heathen writers are loud in his praises, while the Christian represent him as a tyrant. The reason is, that he was zealous for Paganism, and persecuted Christianity. However, towards the close of his life, he published an edict of toleration, which was fixed up in Nicomedia. Death of Galerius.

Maxentius, another persecutor, hated the Christians the more violently, as Constantine, after the example of Constantius Chlorus, showed them favour, either from motives of clemency or policy. But his tyranny was not confined to them; the whole state groaned under his cruelties and rapines. After defeating Alexander, who had revolted in Africa, he became still more ferocious. Not content with exacting from all ranks, even the lowest, heavy contributions as free gifts, he practised every method of injustice and violence, to glut an insatiable rapacity, which was whetted by the most horrid debaucheries. He projected the destruction of Constantine, under pretence of revenging his father's death; while Constantine was meditating his ruin, under colour of freeing Rome from oppression. Tyranny of Maxentius.

311. Constantine prepares for war against him.

The latter, always prudent and active in his measures, neglected nothing to ensure their success. He secured Gaul from invasion; won the hearts of the people by new marks of beneficence; and afterwards invited Maxentius to an interview, who answered only by causing his statues to be dragged through the kennels. This was the signal of an irreconcilable war. The necessity of leaving a large body of troops on the Rhine deprived Constantine of the great-

est part of his forces. His enterprise appeared rash to his officers; his army murmured, and he was obliged to fly to some extraordinary resource.

Embraces Christianity Apparition of the cross.

In this situation, whether his eyes were all at once opened by a supernatural light, or the Christians, who were grown very numerous, especially in Gaul, appeared to him proper instruments for his designs, ambitious men making even religion a political engine, he declared himself in favour of Christianity, and fixed the monogram of Jesus Christ on the *Labarum*, which became the principal standard of the Romans. Every one is acquainted with the miraculous apparition of the cross, related by Eusebius, as the cause of his conversion; a miracle, of which, according to that historian, the whole army was witness, though Lactantius does not mention it, and other ecclesiastical writers speak of it only as a dream. Several contradictory traditions lay the scene in different parts of Gaul, some in Italy, even at the gates of Rome. Hence arise some critical doubts, founded besides on Eusebius omitting so interesting a fact in his ecclesiastical history, and reserving it for the life, or rather panegyric, of Constantine. He assures us, that he had it from that emperor's mouth, which gives the greatest weight to his testimony.

Motives attributed to Constantine by Zosimus.

Zosimus, however, who was an enemy to the Christian faith, attributes this great change to some very strange motives. He pretends, that Constantine, struck with remorse for having cruelly put to death his wife and son, sought in the rites of the ancient worship an expiation for his crimes; but, being answered by the ido-

latrous priests, that they knew none efficacious enough to wash away the guilt of such atrocious deeds, an Egyptian insinuated to him, that, among the Christians, all crimes, however black, might be expiated in an instant; upon which he eagerly embraced a religion favourable to his desires. But Zosimus is refuted by the fact itself. Crispus and Fausta, son and wife of the emperor, were not put to death till the year 326. Besides, what is more repugnant to the spirit of Christianity, than an expiation, so easy and momentaneous, in which the heart has no share; while penance, on the contrary, was a long continued exercise of mortifying virtues?

Advantages of Christianity

It is not surprising, that enraged idolators should have blackened a prince who wanted to destroy idolatry; but how could mankind be insensible to the good promised by such a change, the mistakes from which it would purge the world, and the virtues it would spread abroad in it? In truth, we will see but too clearly this precious blessing corrupted by old vices and new errors; that is to say, we will often see Christians acting contrary to their own principles. Consequently, while they are condemned by those very principles, their excesses will serve as testimonies in favour of the holy doctrine from which they are unhappy enough to depart.

CHAPTER II.

CONSTANTINE MASTER OF ROME. HIS FIRST LAWS.

312. Constantine makes himself master of Rome.

In a short time, Constantine passed the Alps, took Susa, Turin, Verona, Aquileia, Modena, and encamped within two miles of Rome. The cowardly Maxentius, who, though superior in number, kept himself cooped up within the walls, after having dispelled his fears by a number of superstitious rites, at last took the field, gave battle, was defeated and slain. Rome, freed from a tyrant, joyfully received her deliverer; the senate dedicated temples to him; and Africa even appointed priests to pay divine honours to his family. Policy made him apparently countenance those remains of idolatry.

Unites firmness with mildness.

Uniting firmness with mildness, in order to establish his power, he broke the prætorian bands, who were devoted to Maxentius on account of the privileges he had bestowed on them; and, at the same time, used his utmost endeavours to cure the mischiefs of every kind that had been produced by a tyranny of six years. The informers, *those execrable pests*, as he calls them, *the greatest scourge of mankind*, were put to death. The senate was re-established in its rights, the people relieved by his beneficence, Rome and several other cities repaired or embellished, and past misfortunes gave a keener relish to the present happiness.

It is extraordinary that some Christian authors, *Theophanes* and *Cedrenus*, commend Constantine for a pretended edict, by which he ordered all persons who persisted in the worship of idols to be put to death. Could the spirit of persecution have dishonoured this prince, at the very time when he was making himself so estimable by putting an end to that which had been raised against the church? But he knew too well how necessary prudence and mildness were even for the interests of Christianity. Far from exercising severity against the followers of the established religion, he accepted the title of *Pontifex Maximus*,* which was borne by his successors till the time of Gratian, as had been the practice of the preceding emperors from the time of Augustus.

Accepts the title of Pontifex Maximus.

In his first edicts, he only granted to the Christians the public exercise of their religion. They enjoyed liberty of conscience in common with all foreign religions. The single example of the prince could not fail of making illustrious converts. Besides, his zeal prompted him to bestow favours and largesses. He paid great respect to the bishops, and admitted them to his table, though they were distinguished only by the simplicity of virtue. He erected the palace of Lateran into a cathedral, and presented it to the bishop of Rome and his successors. [I omit mentioning the imaginary donation of the sovereignty of Rome, and the West; it being an absurd fiction, the refutation of which is now needless.] He built and endowed several churches. He exempted clerks

Grants the Christians the exercise of their religion.

* High priest, or head of the church.

from municipal functions, which were then burthensome; but this exemption tempting some bad citizens to enter into the clerical order who had no other call than that of self-interest, he prohibited any new clerks to be made, except to fill the room of such as died; and ordered them to be chosen from among those who were already exempted from bearing offices by their poverty. His intention was, that the rich should bear the burdens of the state, and the poor be maintained by the wealth of the clergy. He even ordained that those clerks, who by their birth or fortune were destined to those public functions, should quit the service of the church for that of their country. Under his reign, the ecclesiastical revenues only were exempted from tribute, not the patrimonies of the clerks. And, under his successors, this exemption ceased, when the riches of the church appeared sufficient to authorize the clergy being required to contribute to the common necessities of government.

Good laws in favour of liberty.

Many disorders were remedied by excellent civil laws. Liberty, that primary blessing of mankind, was preserved as far as the usages would permit. The emperor declared that there was no prescription against liberty, and that sixty years slavery did not deprive a free man of his rights. In general, he established it as a maxim, that *more regard ought to be paid to natural equity, than to positive and rigorous law;* reserving to himself, however, the decision of those cases which legislation ought to have obviated, where they could not be reconciled. Convinced, as he expressly says, that the interest of the people is more to be re-

garded than that of the treasury, he prohibited the debtors to the exchequer from being imprisoned or corporally punished; and ordered the deficiencies of the insolvent to be made up by a repartition upon such as were able. In one word, he checked the oppressions of the farmers of the revenue, who always use the names of princes, even against their will, as a weapon for oppressing the poor. The speedy administration of justice, the use of appeal, the regulations to prevent its abuse, and other important objects found in the laws of Constantine, would deserve a more minute and particular account than can be given in this work, which is confined to essentials.

His cruelty, after an expedition against the Franks.

We shall often see with regret this sovereign legislator sully his glory by cruelties directly contrary to his maxims. After an expedition against the Franks, the bravest of the German nations, whom he repulsed and drove beyond the Rhine, he exhibited games at Treves, in which the prisoners were exposed to wild beasts. He there heard a panegyric filled with ideas entirely Pagan; for the ancient religion still prevailed, and it required no little time, moderation, and wisdom, to extirpate it. Had Constantine followed violent counsels in this matter, he would not only have hazarded the loss of his crown, perhaps even of his life, but would have injured the progress of Christianity, by stirring up the hatred of its numerous adversaries.

CHAPTER III.

MAXIMIN DEFEATED BY LICINIUS. LICINIUS DETHRONED BY CONSTANTINE.

313. Maximin attempts to make himself sole master.

MAXIMIN, who reigned in Asia, and had shared his dominions with Licinius, looked upon himself as sole heir of the empire, because he was the only survivor of those who had been nominated by Diocletian and Maximian at their abdication, formed a design of dethroning Licinius and Constantine. He passed the Bosphorus, which was the boundary that had been settled between them, seized Byzantium, and laid siege to Heraclea, otherwise Perinthus. Licinius had just married Constantine's sister at Milan, when he had advice of this invasion. He marched against his competitor with a much inferior army, gave him battle, and defeated him. Maximin being pursued to Tarsus, and losing all hopes of making his escape, swallowed a dose of poison, and put an end to a reign which had been a continued series of tyranny, especially against the Christians. Accordingly, Lactantius assures us that Licinius was miraculously warned in a dream to venture an engagement.

314. War between Constantine and Licinius.

The union between the two emperors was of no long duration. It is not known on which side the rupture began; some lay the blame on Licinius, others on Constantine. The latter arrived in Pannonia, where his colleague

was assembling his troops, and defeated him in two battles, which were followed by a treaty of partition. The conqueror forced his antagonist to cede to him Greece, Macedonia, Pannonia, Dardania, Dacia, all Illyria, and Mæsia Prima. No doubt can be entertained that he was prompted to those conquests by his ambition. He eagerly embraced every method of aggrandizing himself.

Constantine makes his three sons Cæsars.

Some time after, Constantine, in order to fix the empire in his own family, gave the title of Cæsar to his three sons, Crispus, Constantine, and Constantius, though the two youngest were still infants. 'He knew,' says the sophist Libanius, 'that the human mind takes its bent from its occupations; he was therefore desirous to educate his children in the noble exercise of grandeur, to save them from littleness of mind, and inspire their souls with strength and vigour; that in adversity they might not sink from the height of courage, and in prosperity the elevation of their soul might equal that of their fortune.' If Libanius be not mistaken in ascribing the motive of Constantine, that prince doubtless reasoned unjustly; for where one example can be alleged of grandeur producing such effects on young princes, an infinite number may be produced to the contrary. We here see Cæsars less than three years old, invested with the consulship and the command of armies. Doubtless they were not then serving their apprenticeship to the art of reigning. But the people were accustomed to behold in those children their future sovereigns; and the right of succession, which was before uncertain, might thus be established.

New laws respecting religion.

The emperor, taking advantage of a peace of some years duration, published several more laws, and applied himself to the affairs of Christianity. The punishment of crucifixion was abolished; forbearance from labour on Sundays was commanded, except in affairs of agriculture. The Papian Poppæan law against celibacy was repealed, though the ancient privileges of those who had children were preserved. The privilege of the vestals to make bequests by will before they were of age, was granted to persons of both sexes, who consecrated themselves to evangelical virginity. In 321, permission was given for people to bequeath to the church such part of their goods as they pleased. These two last regulations do not indicate great political foresight. The Aruspices retained the privilege of *practising* the impostures of their art in the temples; but they were prohibited, under pain of being burnt alive, from entering into private houses; a restriction which the Pagans doubtless looked upon as a real persecution.

Constantine forms a design to dethrone his colleague.

On the other side, Licinius persecuted the Christians, whom he suspected, not without an appearance of reason, to wish they had Constantine for their master. The latter was no less desirous of uniting the empire under his sole dominion; and the jealousy of these two princes paved the way for scenes of blood. Constantine having attacked the Goths and Sarmatians upon his colleague's territories, Licinius complained of it as an infraction of the treaties. This was sufficient pretence for the former to renew the war. According to Eusebius himself, the pretext of religion being

persecuted, of which his policy availed itself, was not a necessary motive, as things then stood. Ambition might have found others. After such an authority, Constantine's motives may be judged equivocal. God makes even the passions of men subservient to the execution of his eternal decrees.

323. He defeats Licinius, and puts him to death.

This prince was master of a fleet of two hundred galleys, with upwards of two thousand ships of burden, and 130,000 fighting men. At the head of this formidable force he hastened to attack Licinius, whose Asiatic troops were far from being able to resist him. He came up with the enemy at Adrianople in Thrace; and, having given his army for the watchword, *God the Saviour*, with the standard of the cross borne before him, he began the engagement, in which he gained a great victory. About the same time, his son Crispus destroyed the enemy's fleet at Gallipoli. Licinius retired to Chalcedon, whither he was pursued by Constantine, and a treaty of peace was concluded; but the emperor of the East assembling new forces, the war was soon rekindled. Licinius being defeated a second time at Chrysopolis, and besieged in Nicomedia, was obliged to lay down the purple, and sent prisoner to Thessalonica, with a promise of his life; but he was soon after strangled. The partisans of Constantine suppose Licinius to have been guilty of some unknown crime. But why is that crime unknown? why do they stick to vague suspicions? why not acknowledge that such acts of violence against a prince, whose very misfortunes made him an object of respect, can be authorized only by the maxims of a barbarous policy?

CHAPTER IV.

AFFAIRS OF THE CHURCH.

Constantine harasses the idolators, and yet recommends toleration.

CONSTANTINE being now sole master of the empire, gave a greater loose to his zeal for Christianity. He prohibited the heathens from offering sacrifices; threw down and shut up a great number of temples; at the same time that he published an edict in the East, declaring that it was not his desire to trouble the peace of any person, exhorting his subjects to mutual toleration, and disapproving the zeal of such as wanted to make the practice of the ancient religion criminal. Egypt retained its gods and worship. Paganism kept its ground in Rome, and in a great part of the empire, under the protection of the senate. But it was no small matter that the cross was honoured at court, that the worshippers of the true God enjoyed the favour of the prince, and that the others were kept in awe, without daring to show their hatred and resentment. The advantage would have been more solid, had the emperor's piety been more enlightened. While he was composing wretched discourses unsuitable to his dignity, he gave himself up to the counsels of rapacious and dishonest men, who abused the confidence he reposed in them, in order to gratify their passions. The state was a prey to rapine and injustice, though so many judicious laws had been made against them;

and, notwithstanding his great zeal for religion, theological wars sprung up around the throne through the imprudence of the prince, and committed dreadful ravages in the church. We shall give a general idea of this fatal mischief, by considering its influence on public order, the morals, and the understanding of mankind; for theological matters come not within our plan.

The Christian religion breathed only charity.

The more we study the doctrine of Jesus Christ and the apostles, the more clearly we see that its only tendency is to make men holy and happy. The Saviour of the world had reduced the whole law to two precepts, which form the basis of the gospel, *Love God above all things; love thy neighbour as thyself.* Universal charity was the soul of Christianity. It was designed to detach men from this world by the sacrifice of their inordinate passions, but to unite them to one another by a pure and perfect love. It made the social duties an essential means of salvation. It equally condemned selfishness, voluptuousness, enmity, and discord. St Paul had even forbidden, in severe terms, every question proper to excite vain disputes; and nothing appeared farther distant from the spirit of Christianity than a bitter, arrogant, and obstinate zeal, which, under pretence of the service of God, would excite discord in the church or state.

The primitive Christians passive and virtuous,

While the Christians were few in number and afterwards when persecution served as fuel to their virtue, the doctrines of the gospel were followed with the primitive ardour. If any dispute arose, the decision of the apostles, and the bishops their successors, easily solved

the difficulty. The professors of that religion were plain and modest; they did not plume themselves on their knowledge. Instead of arguing on the mysteries, they practised the duties of morality; they were Christians by the humility of their faith, and still more by the goodness of their works.

Corruption of the primitive virtue.

But the church having silently made great progress, and all sorts of persons having brought it into their passions and prejudices, the peace it enjoyed under several princes having produced a relaxation of manners, and a relish for the vanities of the world, some presumptuous Christians were inflamed with an ambitious desire of dictating to their brethren. The Greeks, especially those of Alexandria, being naturally Sophists, were desirous to discuss, to analyze, and to illustrate the doctrines of faith. They introduced into theology the taste and ideas of Platonism. This was subjecting divine truths to all the caprices of opinion. On the other side, some enthusiasts sticking close to the letter of the Scripture, and zealously addicted to an absurd rigour, inconsistent with human nature, became so much more dangerous, as, by the language and externals of piety, they easily drew aside the people, and joined an inflexibility of temper to a heated imagination.

The Christian sects more turbulent than those of the philosophers

Hence sprung sects very different from those of the philosophers. These last formed no distinct body, nor had they any influence on the vulgar. They submitted their systems to the calm examination of reason; they disputed on matters indifferent to the generality; or, at least, if they attacked the national superstitions, it was covertly, in a circle of disciples and read-

ers, who, for the most part, contented themselves with thinking, and formed no cabals. The generality of those philosophers may be reproached with being conceited sophists, and useless to their country; but they could not be charged with disturbing public order.

On the other hand, the principal sectaries being ministers of religion, and pretending to be interpreters of the will of heaven, erecting their own mistakes into doctrines of faith, and inculcating them upon the people as the essentials of religion, easily inspired them with a contagious fanaticism, from whose effects it was difficult to be secured, if their errors were combated. Hence the sects were naturally enemies; and sometimes the orthodox, by an excessive zeal, irritated their hatred and audacity.

Constantine had no sooner declared himself protector of the faith, than those disputes burst out with violence. It was a matter of very great importance to prevent their effects, and, for this purpose, it was necessary to observe a conduct equally firm and moderate. Above all, it was requisite to avoid violent measures, which could only inflame the minds of the people. It was the business of the priests to judge in spiritual affairs; of the prince to watch over the peace and order of the community. As soon as animosity and enthusiasm began to ferment, the spirit of party would infallibly take wing, throw itself into convulsions, and overleap all bounds. Constantine experienced this during his whole reign. He made ecclesiastical disputes affairs of state. Far from calming them, he rendered them more fierce and obstinate.

Schism of the donatists. The schism of the Donatists, which owed its rise to the ordination of the bishop Cecilianus, whom his enemies accused of being a *Traditor; i. e.* of having given up the Scriptures in the time of persecution. That schism filled Africa with discord and scandal. The emperor assembled a council at Rome, and afterwards another at Arles, in the year 314, in order to decide this dispute. He exclaimed against *the impudence* of the Donatists, who appealed to his tribunal from the sentence of the bishops. However, some time after, he tried the cause himself. The schism degenerated into heresy, and gave birth to the barbarous fanaticism of the Circoncellions. These fanatics flew to arms, in order to set the slaves at liberty, and force creditors to discharge their debtors.

Heresy of Arius. Soon after the heresy of Arius, a priest of Alexandria, who denied the divinity of Jesus Christ, opened an inexhaustible spring of quarrels and mischiefs. Some bishops attached to the court, particularly Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Eusebius of Cæsarea, author of the Ecclesiastical History, both favourers of Arianism, * had great influence over the mind of the emperor. The former of them persuaded him that the controversy was merely about words. In consequence of which, he wrote to the bishop of Alexandria, and to the heresiarch, exhorting them to peace and silence, comparing their dispute to that between philosophers of the same sect, who differed in some points, though they agreed in the essentials. His let-

* The authority of Eusebius as an historian, is very great in all matters which do not concern the doctrines of faith. It certainly would be of much more weight had he been orthodox.

ter produced no effect. The quarrel growing more violent, and Osius, the celebrated bishop of Cordova, having prevailed upon him to act with more firmness, he published an invective of his own composition against the Arians; a declamation in every respect unworthy of his majesty, and only calculated for disgusting the reader. After this, no measures were kept; the bishops and the people split into scandalous divisions; the statues of the emperor were insulted by the sectaries, and he was exhorted to revenge the insult. *I*, cried he, clapping his hand to his face, *do not feel myself hurt.* This moderation indicates a great soul; his conduct in several respects shows a littleness of mind.

325. Council of Nice.

At last, he assembled the general council of Nice in Bithynia. The bishops were summoned to it from all parts of the empire, and all the expenses of their journey defrayed. Three hundred and eighteen prelates, among whom are reckoned seventeen Arians, decided, in presence of the emperor, that the Son of God was *consubstantial* with the Father. The writings of Arius were condemned. Constantine prohibited every person from keeping them, under pain of death; yet he only banished the author, which seems a contradictory conduct. Mr Le Beau says, in apologizing for him, that he was much more severe against future than past crimes; and that by the event, the penalties enacted in his laws became only comminatory. But was it not dangerous to establish laws without desiring to put them in execution? The subjects were accustomed to regard capital punishment ordained by the laws, only as a

form of words, which was indifferently applied to every thing. We shall see this imprudence, which became still more common under the following reigns, productive of much mischief to the legislative power and the public good.

Dispute concerning Easter.

A question, which, at first view, seems of small importance, raised keen disputes among the Christians. Some wanted to celebrate Easter after the manner of the Jews, on the day of the full moon in March; others the Sunday after the full moon. The council gave judgment in favour of the latter; but this produced another schism.

The Arians obstinately refused to submit to the decision of the church; and we shall see Constantine himself contribute, by the commission of new faults, to the progress which rendered that heresy so fatal.

CHAPTER V.

BUILDING OF CONSTANTINOPLE. END OF THIS REIGN.

Constantine puts his son and wife to death.

THE emperor having returned to Rome after a long absence, committed in that city two crimes of so black a dye, as never can be effaced. His eldest son, Crispus, a prince of high reputation, being accused by his stepmother Fausta, of having declared a passion for her, his father, without further examination, ordered him to be put to death. The public openly expressed their indignation; and

the empress being in her turn charged with an infamous correspondence, was in like manner put to death on a bare accusation.

He quits Rome.

Several people of distinguished rank perished without any known reason. Licinius the younger, a boy of twelve years of age, was in the number of victims. In consequence of so many acts of cruelty, a *placard* was affixed to the gates of the palace, in which that prince was described as a second Nero. Rome resounded with reproaches and curses against him; and the populace had the audacity to insult him. At last, he took a final leave of that city, which equally detested his religion and his person.

329. He settles at Byzantium.

Having formed the resolution of building a new capital, he first cast his eyes upon ancient Troy, whose name was so dear to the Romans; but he preferred Byzantium for the excellence of its situation on the Thracian Bosphorus, being separated from Asia by a strait of only seven stadia,* and enriched with all the gifts of nature. He greatly enlarged its compass, erected superb edifices, made it a second Rome, gave it the name of Constantinople after himself, and sacrificed to it the interests of the empire.

Pernicious privileges granted to that city.

In order to people it, he deprived all the landholders in Asia of the natural right of disposing of their estates, even by will, unless they had a house in that city. All kinds of privileges, and distributions of corn, oil, wine, were lavished on those who fixed their residence there.

* The stadium is about six hundred French feet.

The Alexandrian fleet, which furnished Rome with corn, Campania being converted into gardens, was destined to furnish Constantinople, whence Athens formerly drew its subsistence. Fourscore thousand measures of wheat were distributed among the people every day. In a short time the Asiatic fleets, joined to the Egyptian, were insufficient for the supply of the new city.

Hateful imposts. Rome depopulated and impoverished.

Burdensome and infamous imposts were levied not only on merchandize, but upon ordure, which none could carry away without purchasing a license; brothels, animals, and even dogs, were taxed. Those imposts, the invention of which is attributed by Zosimus to Constantine, though some of them had been established in former times, scarce defrayed the profuse expenses. Rome lost a great number of its principal citizens, who were infallibly drawn to the court; it lost its riches, its lustre, its power, though they were then necessary to stop the invasion of the barbarians. 'It showed great ignorance of the interests of the empire,' says Abbé Mably, 'to build a new capital, while the preservation of the ancient was so difficult, to throw away immense sums in erecting a magnificent city, while the empire, exhausted by all the scourges it had felt, could with difficulty maintain its armies.' The new government established by Constantine was an evil of still greater magnitude. We shall only describe its principal features, which it is of importance to consider.

The senate at Constantinople without authority.

The same ranks and offices were established at Constantinople as at Rome. But the senate had not the same weight in affairs of govern-

ment. Though under bad princes, the Roman senate was enslaved, at least the shadow of that illustrious body wore a majestic and commanding appearance; and from time to time it resumed a portion of its principles, with part of its authority. On the contrary, the senate of Constantinople being, from the time of its institution, a slave to the court, the government became arbitrary, offices lost their dignity, and legislation fell into the hands of a single man.

Two empires and two capitals.

The erection of two capitals naturally produced a division of the empire. The Eastern comprehended all the countries from the Danube to the remotest borders of Egypt, and from the Adriatic Gulf to the frontiers of Persia. The emperor thought proper, after the example of Dioclesian, to subdivide that vast body. He created four *Præfecti Prætorii*, who had each the government of a certain district. These consisted of a number of provinces, which were called *Dioceses*. The four præfectures were those of the East, Illyria, Italy, and Gaul; with Spain, Mauritania, Tingitana, and Britain; and these provinces had peculiar governors, who were dependent on the præfect. Dukes and counts were appointed for the defence of the frontiers. They and their troops had some lands of the barbarous nations assigned them, which were called *Marches*, and might be transmitted to their heirs if they bore arms. These lands went by the title of benefices. As to the *præfecti prætorii*, who were at first the ministers and lieutenants of the sovereign, their office became purely civil; they

administered justice, and had the care of the revenue.

Constantine substituted in their room two masters of the militia; and still more to lessen a dignity which had been once so formidable, he established an order of patricians, who, though they bore no office, were superior in rank to the præfects.

The new government too complicated.

It is evident at first sight, that, by an excessive multiplication of dignities, he overloaded the revenue; that it was almost impossible to maintain harmony in so complicated an administration; in a word, that so considerable a change must have drawn on numberless inconveniencies, in a state already ruined, whose parts were ready to fall to pieces of themselves, and whose head was unable to make the members act with sufficient vigour. It was an old decayed building, which tottered on every side, when an attempt was made to alter its plan.

The troops withdrawn from the frontiers.

Zosimus reproaches Constantine with having drawn off the troops destined to repulse the barbarians from the frontiers, and placing them in garrison in the cities. 'This,' according to Montesquieu, 'produced two evils; one, the removal of the barrier which restrained so many nations; and the other, the soldiers becoming effeminate, by frequenting the circus and theatre.' Discipline was entirely enervated by their residing in cities.

Titles endlessly multiplied.

Among the pernicious abuses may be ranked those titles of vanity, which were endlessly multiplied; *Noble*, *Most Noble*, *Illustrious*, *Most Illustrious*, *Most Perfect*, *Sublimity*, *Excellency*, *Magnificence*, *Greatness*, *Eminence*, *Reverence*, &c. As false greatness inspires littleness of

soul, all ideas were centered in a trifling ceremonial; *minutiæ*, words took place of things; the glare of titles darkened the lustre of merit. What the Scipios, and the more illustrious Cæsars, would have regarded as matter of ridicule, were now become the only objects of desire and attention to the greatest men.

Pride of Constantine.

Constantine set an example of this affectation of dignity. He always wore the diadem. His robes glittered with pearls. The pomp of his court, and magnificence of his festivals, breathed the Asiatic luxury; a strange method of repairing the breaches of the empire, and securing the prosperity of Constantinople!

The Goths defeated.

In the latter part of his reign we find more subject for censure than praise. He gained a great victory over the Goths, but he raised many of them to dignities, and, in some measure, opened a passage into the empire to the barbarians. He received the ambassadors of Sapor II. king of Persia, with whose preparations for war he was not unacquainted; but he contented himself with writing to him in favour of the Christian religion, which was persecuted by that prince; and sent him a quantity of iron to forge arms. He requested the prayers of the bishops, and of the famous St Anthony, a hermit of Thebais; but he put to death the philosopher Sopater, whose crime, if we may credit Eunapius, was his desire of reforming the manners of the court. The courtiers accused him of magic, in order to get rid of him.

Arians protected.

At last, after so many instances of severity against the Arians, he gave himself up to an Arian priest; recalled Arius and his followers from banishment; admitted their false pro-

fessions of faith, and protected them openly. He tried to induce St Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, to receive the heresiarch; and, wearied with his refusals, lent his ear to calumny, and banished that inflexible defender of the council of Nice, who had been declared guilty by the packed councils of Tyre and Jerusalem.

337. Constantine dies in Asia.

Sapor had already put the iron, with which he was imprudently supplied, to its proper use. He demanded back the five provinces which had been ceded to Galerius; and, meeting with a refusal, ravaged Mesopotamia, and insulted the Roman empire.

The emperor, at the age of sixty-three, entered Asia, and repulsed the enemy. He then fell dangerously ill, and, notwithstanding his advanced age, received baptism; put his will into the hands of an Arian priest, who enjoyed his confidence, and died at Nicomedia, after a reign of thirty years. He has been honoured as a saint by several churches; and the Greeks and Muscovites celebrate his festival on the twenty-first of May.

Character of that prince.

Whatever praises Constantine may deserve for the establishment of Christianity, the stains with which his glory is tarnished are indelible. Facts speak, and them we have related. His political abilities do not outweigh his faults. 'With some genius for war,' this is the opinion formed of him by the Abbé Mably, 'which he employed only for the destruction of his private enemies, and not those of the empire, he possessed no one quality proper for government. Duped by his ministers and favourites, he saw only with their eyes. A natural rest-

lessness of temper kept him in perpetual motion, though his pursuits were often fruitless. If he seemed constantly engaged in grand projects, the conception of them indicated weakness and presumption, and their execution showed him an indifferent politician. He contributed more than any other to hasten the ruin of the empire.[1]

Eusebius, his panegyrist much to be suspected.

His virtues are extolled to the skies by Eusebius of Cæsarea; but a panegyrist is seldom a historian. That bishop, who had all the qualities of a courtier, carried his dissimulation so far, in his Ecclesiastical History, as not to mention either Arius or his sect, nor speak of the principal object of the Nicene council, though he gives a long description of it in his Life of Constantine, and limits its decisions to the controversy about the celebration of Easter. It is strange, that so respectable a writer should have committed this unpardonable fault. The Pagans, likewise, have blackened Constantine by their satire, more than the others have extolled him by their flatteries. According to Victor the Younger, during the first ten years of his reign, he was a great prince; during the ten following, a robber; and, during the ten last, a prodigal. Eusebius himself acknowledges, that his excessive easiness let loose two great vices, violence, oppressive of the weak, in order to satiate the ever-craving avidity of the powerful, and the hypocrisy of pretended Christians, who entered into the church in order to court his favour. We may form a proper estimate of that emperor, says the judicious Abbé Fleury, by believing the faults ascribed to him by Eusebius, and the good spoken of him by Zosimus.

Did not make bishops judges without appeal.

In the Theodosian code, a law is ascribed to him, constituting the bishops judges, without appeal, in all causes brought before their tribunal by either of the parties. This law, which is repugnant to civil order, is rejected by the best authors as supposititious. Doth Cujas show sufficient discernment, when he defends it, by alleging the virtue and justice of the bishops in those times? Their intrigues, their packed councils, their numerous excesses, would rather prove it to have been even then necessary to restrain them within the limits of their spiritual authority. There were many holy prelates, whose judgment must, without doubt, have been perfectly conformable to charity and justice; but how many others gave themselves up to passion and prejudice!

CONSTANTIUS AND HIS TWO BROTHERS.

CHAPTER I.

TO THE TIME WHEN JULIAN WAS CREATED CÆSAR.

337. Massacre of Constantine's brothers and nephews.

Constantine had imprudently divided the empire among his three sons and two of his nephews. These last, Delmatius and Hannibalion, were massacred by the soldiers, after their uncle's death, together with his two brothers,

five other of his nephews, and his principal courtiers.

It is not to be doubted, that this horrible massacre was commanded or directed by ambition. It is ascribed to Constantius, the emperor's younger and best beloved son, though least deserving of his affection. How is it possible that a prince, whose talents for politics are commended by some writers, should not have foreseen, that, by making five sovereigns, he not only ruined the empire, but kindled the flames of war in his own family?

Division of the empire among his three sons.

The three brothers made a new division, in which were comprehended the spoils of their cousins. Constantine, the eldest, kept Gaul, Great Britain, Spain, and, probably, made an acquisition of Thrace and Constantinople, which he soon ceded to Constantius, who was master of all Asia and Egypt. Constans, the youngest, had Italy, Illyria, Africa, Macedonia, and Greece. The eldest was only twenty years of age; and none of them appeared to possess talents fit for government. It was observed, that Commodus was the only emperor who had been born during the reign of his father; and unfavourable presages were made of those princes, who, if I may be allowed the expression, breathed the pride of sovereignty from their cradle.

Laws against informers.

However, they jointly enacted some good laws, particularly against informers, who had multiplied prodigiously. After their father's example, they forbade anonymous libels being regarded as evidence in a court of justice.

Constantius says in one of his laws, *The man is to be regarded as innocent who has enemies, but*

no accusers. But, unless justice prevail in the courts, informations will continue.

War between Constantine and Constans.

Soon after, Constantine, who was discontented with his share, and had some pretensions on Italy, being unable to obtain any thing from his brother Constans by negociation, had recourse to arms, and passed the Alps in the year 340. His brother, now become his enemy, was then in Dacia, from whence he sent an army, which he proposed to follow with the greatest forces he could raise, when Constantine fell into an ambuscade, was defeated, and slain; and Constans remained sole master of the West. His reign was inglorious. He was a slave to his pleasures and his flatterers; and though he justly drew upon himself some encomiums from the Christians for his protection of the Catholic religion, his conduct was, in other respects, stained with vices, which the Pagans have painted with all the acrimony of hatred.

In the year 350, Magnentius, a German, and manumitted slave, who was at the head of two legions, formed a conspiracy against him at Autun, and caused himself to be proclaimed Augustus. The emperor received intelligence of the revolt while he was at a hunting match, and attempted to escape into Spain, but was assassinated on the road.

Disturbances caused by the Arian controversy.

In the interval between these revolutions, the troubles occasioned by the Arians continued with more violence than ever. Constantius had declared in their favour, and his brothers had sided with the Catholics. St Athanasius, who had been restored to the see of Alexandria, did not remain long undisturbed. The accusations against him were renewed. He was

condemned and deposed by a council held at Antioch; and Gregory, who was named his successor, forcibly took possession of the see. The bishops were filled with rage against each other; discord universally prevailed, and the East and West were divided; forgetting that religion, instead of being a cause of quarrel, ought to have been a bond to unite them. A general council seemed the most proper means for conciliating these feuds. It was assembled at Sardica, on the borders of the two empires; but the Orientals, finding themselves the weakest, separated from the Western prelates, and held their assembly at Philippopolis in Thrace. The decisions of the two councils were contradictory; they reciprocally acquitted and anathematized the same persons. That composed of the Arian bishops took the name of the council of Sardica as well as the other. Hence it comes, that St Augustine, being unacquainted with the orthodox council, has mentioned that of Sardica as an assembly of heretics.

347. Two councils at Sardica.

We shall not trace this dispute through its tedious windings. It is sufficient to observe, that it would have kindled a war between Constans and Constantius, had not the latter yielded to the establishment of Athanasius; and that the Catholics would have been satisfied with the Confession of Faith given by the Arians, had not these obstinately persisted in rejecting the term *consubstantial*. That word, which was become sacred, and the personal cause of Athanasius, were perpetual objects of dissension. The reason of which was, that *consubstantiality* actually made an essential part of the orthodox

A word and the cause of St Athanasius, united.

doctrine, and Athanasius was persecuted as the most zealous defender of that doctrine.

348. Sapor II. becomes the terror of the Romans.

Constantius, from the beginning of his reign, had a powerful enemy in Sapor II. king of Persia, who grew more formidable, as the emperor gave himself up entirely to theological controversy, and neglected the affairs of state. The Persians routed him at the battle of Singara; became the terror of the Romans, and ravaged Mesopotamia. Sapor laid siege to Nisibis, which he continued with incredible vigour for four months; nor did he raise it at last but to oppose an invasion of the barbarians. This prince persecuted the Christians from motives of policy. Formerly, in times of persecution, Persia had afforded them an asylum; but, after their religion, by the zeal of Constantine, had been established in the empire, they were looked upon with a suspicious eye, and treated as public enemies.

350. War between Constantine and Magnentius.

Magnentius enjoyed the fruits of his usurpation in the West. Nepotian, a nephew of Constantine, who had escaped the massacre of his family, attempting to seize upon the city of Rome, had perished, together with his mother, and his principal partisans. Vetranion, an old experienced general, though so illiterate that he could not even read, had been proclaimed Augustus in Pannonia, but wanted the qualifications necessary for maintaining his high fortune. Constantius at last marched from Asia, at the head of all his forces, in order to deprive Magnentius of his dominions. It is pretended that he exhorted his soldiers to receive baptism; and he has been made to express himself in the following terms: 'If any

man refuses to be baptized, let him retire. I desire to have no soldiers but who are not enrolled under the banners of Jesus Christ.' But as he himself was not baptized till at the point of death, is there not some reason to doubt of such demonstrations of zeal?

Vetranion had entered into a league with Magnentius, and marched against the emperor; but, instead of coming to an engagement, entered into a treaty, in which he was duped by Constantius, who debauched his troops, and forced him to abdicate his authority. It is said, that he consoled him with an extraordinary piece of morality, conceived in these terms: *You lose only an insignificant name, which has nothing real but the mortifications it brings with it; and you are going to enjoy solid happiness, without a mixture of uneasiness.* It is added, that the good old man, charmed with his retirement, sent him a letter, containing the following words: *You are wrong in not taking a share in that felicity which you have the art of procuring for others.* Such men had a claim to the title of philosophers. They either affected that character, or the historians have spoken for them.

Vetranion, suffers himself to be deceived.

While the unwarlike Constantius was amusing himself with holding a council at Sirmium, Magnentius approached at the head of his army. When ready to pass the Save, he was met by an envoy from the emperor, with proposals of peace, which he rejected, and advanced to Mursa on the Drave, the destined scene of a celebrated action, decisive of the fate of the empire. The battle was fought with great fury. More than fifty thousand of the best troops

351. Victory at Mursa over Magnentius.

were cut to pieces. The Gauls, under Magnentius, performed wonders, and were slain almost to a man; but, at last, the usurper turned his back, after having lost Marcellinus, to whom he was indebted for his promotion.

Cowardice of Constantius.

Constantius did not appear in the field, but, with trembling expectation, waited the event of the engagement in a neighbouring church, where he was attended by the Arian bishop of Mursa. That crafty impostor had taken proper precautions to be informed of the success; and all at once proclaimed the victory, pretending that the news had been brought to him by an angel. The emperor, giving entire credit to the miracle, honoured him as a saint, and attributed to him all the success of his arms. It is easy to judge what gross errors in conduct must spring from such low superstition. We shall see Constantius striking upon all the shoals of credulity and weakness.

Death of Magnentius.

The year following, Magnentius, who, for his cruel tyranny, was an object of universal detestation at Rome, took refuge in Gaul, was defeated in Dauphiny by the emperor's generals; and, perceiving that his soldiers were resolved to deliver him up, in a transport of despair, murdered his cousins, his friends, and even his mother, after which he stabbed himself with his own sword.

353. Constantius tyrannises over his subjects.

As soon as Constantius was delivered from this enemy, he became more despicable and cruel than ever. A continual prey to his suspicions, every thing was to him an object of dread; and his terrors and distrust were increased by the vile eunuchs with whom his palace was filled; for the infamous custom of

keeping eunuchs had found its way into the court with the other abuses of Oriental despotism. Under pretence of destroying the usurper's party, he exercised the most odious tyranny. The encouragement of informers produced the ordinary effects; for one criminal a thousand innocent persons were put to death. The eunuch, Paul, secretary, or rather *satellite* of the prince, filled every quarter of the empire with marks of his injustice, and raised a general alarm. Great Britain was the principal scene of his barbarous inquisition. Martinus, its governor, sensibly touched with the miseries of the public, and foreseeing that he would one day be involved in them in his turn, formed a design to rid the world of this savage monster; but, failing in the attempt, laid violent hands on himself. All sentences of death, which, according to custom, were presented to the emperor, were confirmed without exception; and the empress, Eusebia, dared not solicit the pardon even of a single person. The tyrannical orders and caprices of the court struck more terror than the invasions of the Franks, Alemains, and other barbarians.

Gallus made Cæsar. Oppresses the East.

The East was still more oppressed under the government of Gallus, nephew of Constantine the Great, who, after having been kept six years with his brother Julian in a kind of captivity in Cappadocia, was promoted to the dignity of Cæsar, married to the emperor's sister, and sent against the Persians. He was a man of an unfeeling temper, utterly destitute of abilities, naturally surpassing Constantine in cruelty, which was inflamed by his wife Constantina, a woman of a disposition as inhuman as his own; and in

a court filled with flatterers and villains, he became a merciless tyrant.

He filled Antioch and the whole East with murders; caused Domitian, præfect of the province, to be assassinated, under a false pretence of a conspiracy, and gave up the innocent to the rage of informers, to tortures, and to death.

Constantius destroys Gallus.

This violent conduct gave umbrage to Constantius. He was afraid that Cæsar designed to make himself independent, and employed insinuations and the most pressing instances to prevail on him to come to Italy. Gallus foresaw the danger; it is even conjectured that he entertained some designs of revolting; but his schemes miscarried, and he found himself under a necessity of setting out. His wife, in whom he placed all his hopes, was sent before him; but she died on the road. He was arrested at Pettau in Noricum, and his head cut off. Constantius being now intoxicated with his power, assumed the titles of *Master of the World*, and *Eternal*. This ridiculous pride was accompanied with all the refinements of tyranny. Never had informers so fair a field for displaying their villany. Dreams were made capital crimes. The persons who were imprudent enough to disclose them, ran the hazard of their lives, if what they had dreamed could possibly be susceptible of a sinister interpretation. An informer, the worthy minister of the infamous Paul, was ludicrously styled the *Count of Dreams*, because he employed himself with a good deal of success in that branch. The malignity of mankind seemed to increase in proportion to the universal degeneracy.

When meanness and prejudice guide the pen, what will it not be guilty of? Some panegyrists have praised Constantius for his clemency, and several ecclesiastical writers bestow the highest encomiums upon Gallus. Mr Le Beau has judiciously remarked, that this is owing to his firm adherence to the true religion, from which his brother Julian apostatized. If he was guided by the counsels of Ætius, a celebrated Arian, and, consequently, was a bad Catholic, at least he always remained within the pale of Christianity, and his vices and tyranny were veiled under an external show of piety. How prone are we to fall into error, when we consider objects only in one point of view! Ammianus Marcellinus, an author generally esteemed for his judgment and veracity, who was an eyewitness of the transactions he relates, confutes by facts those panegyrics which were dictated by the spirit of party or adulation. Facts are certain proofs; praises are frequently only the language of deceit. Of this we have here a remarkable example.

False eulogiums on Constantius and Gallus.

The sophist Themistius having been made a senator of Constantinople, in recompense pronounced a panegyric on Constantius, in which he extols him as the greatest philosopher of the empire; so imprudently is truth sometimes sported with.

The sophist Themistius.

This prince was as eminent in politics as in philosophy. He had two great generals left, Ursicinus, who had signalized himself in the East; and Sylvanus, who protected Gaul against the barbarians, and these the courtiers conspired to ruin. The latter, accused by the blackest calumny, exposed to a thousand in-

Two great generals ruin each other.

sults, dreading every thing from an ungrateful and perfidious court, determined to revolt, and caused himself to be proclaimed emperor.

Ursicinus, who had been before disgraced, was then pitched upon as the only person capable of putting a stop to the rebellion. Even his enemies favoured his appointment to the command, in hopes that the two generals would destroy each other. But though the court employed Ursicinus, it was only as an instrument of treachery. They pretended ignorance of the step taken by Sylvanus, and wrote to him a letter of thanks for his behaviour in his government.

The other general went to meet him at Cologne, and, finding that his party could not be ruined by open force, made use of artifice, gained his confidence, by affecting to sympathize with his discontent, and enter into his projects, corrupted his troops, caused him to be slain, and lamented his death, as was done by the whole empire.

The provinces left a prey to the barbarians.

When the court employed Ursicinus to execute this odious commission, their intention was not to restore him to his power, even in case he succeeded. He remained in Gaul with the title of general, but without an army. The troops of Sylvanus had immediately dispersed; and the emperor chose rather to lose that province than send supplies to the great general whose merit gave him umbrage. Thus was it totally abandoned as a prey to the barbarians. The Franks and Alemains, and the Saxons, ravaged the country, after destroying forty-five towns on the banks of the Rhine. Pannonia and Upper Mœsia were laid waste by the Quadi and

Sarmatians. The miseries of the East were increased by the dreadful incursions of the Persians; while Constantius, inattentive to every thing but the quarrels of theologists, spent his time in assembling councils, persecuting the defenders of consubstantiality, provoking the zeal of the Catholic bishops, and inflaming the audacity of the Arians; and thus fomented discord and confusion in the heart of his dominions, while the frontiers were laid waste with fire and sword. Such was the philosopher of Themistius.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE PROMOTION OF JULIAN TILL HIS REVOLT.

The emperor makes Julian Cæsar.

Constantius, being surrounded by so many dangers, suffered himself, notwithstanding his jealous distrust, to be prevailed upon by the empress Eusebia, to bestow the dignity of Cæsar upon the celebrated Julian, with whose character it is now proper to acquaint the reader. This prince, who was brother to Gallus, and cousin-german of the emperor, had been favoured by nature with the happiest dispositions, and formed by misfortune and study, which lessons, in general, far surpass those taught in the bosom of grandeur and the lap of pleasure. They had endowed him with a greatness of soul superior to the nobility of his birth, by inspiring him with a love of virtue, a

desire of instruction, a contempt of pleasures, and a hatred for every thing mean or degrading to human nature. Upon his quitting the castle of Macellum, in Cappadocia, where he and his brother had been confined six years, he obtained leave to complete his studies, first at Constantinople, and afterwards at Athens. There he distinguished himself by his modesty, and an intense and successful application to his studies. Happy if he had made the true religion the basis of his conduct! But conceiving a dislike to Christianity, because his first preceptors had tired him with exercises of devotion, or the obstinate disputes between its different sects had given him a distaste to the whole, he addicted himself entirely to Maximus of Ephesus, and some other Platonic philosophers. He soon became infatuated with their absurd and mysterious theurgy, which they shrowded under the veil of sublime piety, and in their school was filled with superstition and enthusiasm: But, though seduced by frivolous illusions, he at least attached himself to something real, by his strict observance of moral duties. May we not give to Christianity the honour of those examples of virtue which make his memory respectable? A Christian education had unquestionably fostered the seeds of it in his heart.

He disguised his inclination for idolatry.

Gallus, while he was Cæsar, taking alarm at the inclination which his brother even then showed for idolatry, sent him Ætius, the apostle of Arianism, in quality of superintendant, and as an estimable guide. Julian, by an affectation of zeal for that sect, removed all suspicion; and, according to some ecclesiasti-

cal historians, in order the better to disguise his real sentiments, and escape the distrustful jealousy of Constantine, put on the monkish habit, and performed the office of deacon. After the death of Gallus, he passed seven months in a kind of imprisonment; and had it not been for the protection of Eusebia, who entertained an esteem for him, he would have undergone the same fate with his brother.

355. Constantine gives him no authority.

The emperor named him Cæsar at the age of twenty-three, and gave him his sister, Helena, in marriage; but, far from admitting him to share his confidence, put him, if I may be allowed the expression, into trammels. His domestics were removed, and their places filled with spies; his friends durst not come near him; and though he had the title of Cæsar, he had no power.

Sends him into Gaul.

Being made governor of Gaul, a council was appointed for him, or rather so many masters, to direct his whole conduct. He had few troops, little money, and nothing in his own disposal. With whatever faults this prince may be reproached, it is impossible not to admire his greatness of soul, and the fertility of his genius, when we see him surmounting so many obstacles in the career of glory.

Julian's conduct in that province.

He had passed his life in the schools, where he had even contracted the rust of pedantry; was neither acquainted with the arts of war nor government; wanted experience, and was destitute of authority; yet, in the very beginning of his administration, he showed himself a man of superior abilities. During his stay at Vienna, where he resided the first winter, he applied himself to the study of the affairs of

the province, and the art of war. He set his troops an example of attention to discipline and patience of fatigue; his diet was the same as that of the common soldiers; he exposed himself to all the inclemencies of the winter, slept upon a hide, and rose at midnight; allowed himself no relaxation from business, and study formed his sole amusement. By these methods he gained the admiration and affections of the soldiery. The Gauls respected and loved him for his equitable administration of justice; his superintendants sunk into insignificance, for he did every thing without their help; and all his measures were crowned with success. Two panegyrics on Constantius, written by him about that time, are proofs of his political address. He likewise concealed his religious sentiments with so great dexterity, that St. Hilary of Poitiers was deceived by appearances, and praises him as a pious prince in the same work where his brother is described as an enemy to the church.

Drives out the barbarians.

Julian's exploits perfectly corresponded with the idea entertained of his merit. Every one of his campaigns was attended with victory. In a word, by an equal exertion of skill and courage, he freed Gaul from the Alemains, who had spread themselves through the whole country, and even besieged him in Sens; and, after cutting their army to pieces near Strasbourg, carried the terror of his arms on the other side of the Rhine. One thing more amazing is, that the courtiers ridiculed his victories, while Constantius stupidly arrogated the honour of them to himself. In such a court,

all decisions must have been unjust or capricious.

Constantius, who had chosen Milan for his ordinary residence, made a progress to Rome, in order to celebrate his triumph over Magnentius; an odious ceremony, as civil wars afford no proper subject for it. Having never before seen that capital, its edifices filled him with admiration; and, that he might leave a monument of his visit, he transported from Egypt the obelisk of Rameses, which was one hundred and thirty-two feet high, and had been destined by Constantine for an ornament to Constantinople. It was erected by Sextus Quintus, and is the largest in Rome. Constantius goes to Rome for the first time.

Though the emperor, before his entry, ordered the removal of the celebrated altar dedicated to Victory, which had been erected anew by Magnentius in the senate house, he visited the temples of the gods, praised their founders, appointed Pagan priests, and confirmed the privileges of the vestals. Yet he had forbidden the offering of sacrifices under pain of death, at least if we may give credit to a law inserted in the Theodosian code, which probably was never promulgated. * In religious affairs his conduct was always inconsistent. Though he tolerated Paganism at Rome, he persisted in disturbing the empire by his zeal for Arianism, the different sects of which he alternately protected and persecuted, regulating his conduct according to the will of his eunuchs and courtiers, by whose intrigues all affairs were determined. He grants a toleration in Rome.

* Vide Memoires de l'Acad. des Inscript. t. 15.

359. Sapor forms dangerous enterprises. Proposals of peace had been offered to Sapor, which that implacable enemy of the Romans rejected as incompatible with his pretensions; and, being instigated by a man of great fortune, a native of Mesopotamia, who had been obliged by oppressive treatment to leave the empire, he resolved not to content himself as formerly with sudden incursions, which were attended with no durable advantage, but to push the war with vigour. Ursicinus then commanded in the East, and the eunuchs advised, or rather ordered, him to be recalled at the conjuncture when his services were most wanted. The whole country was filled with murmurs for the loss of its defender. It is true he was sent back, but without authority, and only that he might bear the blame of the miscarriages of Sabinian, a weak general, utterly unqualified for the command. This wretched court rejoiced at the calamities of the public, provided they could be made subservient to the ruin of men of exalted merit, who were the objects of its jealousy and hatred.

Constantius assembles councils. Amida, in Mesopotamia, was taken by Sapor after a long siege, which cost him thirty thousand men, while the attention of Constantius was turned on assembling the councils of Rimini and Seleucia, in order to settle the theological controversies which grew fiercer in proportion to the multiplication of decisions and formularies of faith; but of these we shall have occasion to speak again at the end of this reign.

Julian studies the happiness of Gaul. The conduct of Julian in Gaul formed a singular contrast to that of the emperor. He devoted the intervals of leisure from the war to the administration of justice and relief of the people,

Florentius, his Prætorian Præfect, endeavouring to increase the taxes, under pretence of the exigencies of the war, Julian himself demonstrated by calculation, that they were more than sufficient to defray all expenses. He reduced the poll-tax from twenty-five pieces of gold, each worth about sixteen shillings of our money, to seven. His severity against those who were guilty of extortion in collecting the public money, did not prevent him from guarding against the malice of accusers. Numerius being brought to trial for this crime, denied the whole charge; and there being no proof, the accuser exclaimed, *Who will ever be found guilty, if a denial of the fact be sufficient for his acquittal?* Julian retorted, *Who will ever be acquitted, if a bare accusation be sufficient ground to find him guilty?*

CHAPTER III.

END OF THE REIGN OF CONSTANTIUS.

FLORENTIUS, and other enemies of justice, failed not to blacken Julian at the court, to render him an object of suspicion, and taint all his actions with the poison of calumny. The emperor now beheld him only in the light of a rival; and, with a view to disarm him, ordered the flower of his troops to Constantinople, from whence they were to march against the Persians. Thus, after four glorious campaigns, Julian found himself at the eve of losing the

360. The emperor orders Julian into the East.

whole fruit of his labours. He saw that fine province which he had saved and restored to a flourishing condition, on the point of falling a prey to those barbarians whom he had vanquished.

Forced by the Gauls to accept the diadem.

However he obeyed, published the emperor's orders, and urged their execution. But the Gallic troops, unable to bear the thoughts of quitting their country and their families, to carry on a war in Asia, took quite contrary measures, proclaimed him emperor at Paris, and, listening neither to his remonstrances nor entreaties, by dint of importunity and threats, at last obliged him to accept the diadem. Several writers charge him with having secretly directed the conspiracy; but of this they give no evidence. Perhaps he showed more reluctance than he really felt; but, as his most inveterate enemies have not been able to convict him, he must be acquitted by history. Let us take a particular view of his conduct in a conjuncture so critical.

He acts with prudence.

His first step was granting pardon to a set of traitors who had conspired against his life. He then declared to his soldiers, that promotion to military or civil offices should be the sole reward of services, and that, whoever solicited him for any other, must expect a refusal. He wrote a letter to Constantius, in which he gave an account of the violence put upon him, and explained the motives of his compliance; promising still to retain for him the dutiful respect of a subject; representing, besides, that the Gallic troops would never consent to march into Asia, and the absolute necessity of sharing the imperial dignity; he concluded with

observing, that a quarrel between the princes would be productive of the greatest calamities. Another letter, which ought not to have been made public, was filled with reproaches, dictated by resentment.

The emperor, far from entering into a negociation, only despatched severe orders, which Julian communicating to the troops, they interrupted him with the cry of *Julian emperor, the province, the army, the empire require it.* After this, he hesitated no longer in supporting a measure, on which he saw depended his own life and that of his friends. If revolting against a sovereign were in any case justifiable, this certainly might be excused, considering its motives and circumstances. Constantius refuses all accommodation.

Julian having nothing to hope, and every thing to fear from Constantius, resolved to be beforehand with him. He took his measures with prudence, provided for the security of Gaul, and exacted an oath of fidelity from his troops. His soldiers swore to follow wherever he led them, though those very men had refused to quit their own country in compliance with the emperor's orders; so different sentiments did they entertain of those two princes! He marched on foot with his troops, bareheaded, and shared in all the fatigues of the common soldiers. He surprised Sirmium before the inhabitants even had intelligence of his march, and seized upon the pass of Succa, between mount Hæmus and Rhodopé, at the entrance of Thrace. Italy and Greece eagerly espoused his party; but two Pannonian legions, which, from a suspicion of their fidelity, he had ordered into Gaul, having revolted on 361. Julian marches against him.

their march and seized upon Aquileia, he stopped to retake that place. This siege would necessarily take up a long time; and the news from the East made him very uneasy; but an unforeseen event at once put him in possession of the empire, without exposing him to the disgrace of shedding Roman blood.

Death of Constantius.

Sapor having made himself master of Singara and Bezabda, two important cities of Mesopotamia, Constantius made an unsuccessful attempt to retake the latter. The Catholics, Arians, and Idolaters, joined in attributing the disgraceful event of this enterprise to his persecution of their respective religions; a remarkable proof of the temerity with which men interpret the judgments of heaven. He was preparing to renew the war against the Persians, when he received the news of Julian's rapid march; and Sapor having retired, he set out from Antioch to oppose the rebel, but could proceed no farther than Cilicia, where he was seized with a burning fever, which put an end to his life in the forty-fourth year of his age, after he had, like his father, been baptized when in the agonies of death.

He did little good and much harm.

Though he enacted a few good laws, made some successful expeditions, gave some instances of clemency, and showed some signs of virtue, his memory is not the less odious nor contemptible; for the mischief he did far outweighed the good. To mention no other, the religious quarrels which he inflamed, while he flattered himself with the thoughts of appeasing them, became an incurable wound in the church and the empire. Ammianus, who, without fanaticism, was attached to the ancient worship of Rome,

thus expresses himself on that subject: 'By a womanish superstition he disturbed Christianity, plain and simple as the nature of that religion is; and, applying himself rather curiously to fathom its depths, than to regulate its practice in a manner becoming his dignity, he excited great divisions, and fomented them by disputes about words. He exhausted the funds destined for defraying the travelling expenses of men employed in the business of the state, by keeping the bishops in perpetual motion for the holding of councils, in which he was ambitious of prescribing the mode of worship and the rules of belief.'

The testimony of this historian ought to have the more weight, as his impartiality has raised doubts with regard to his religion. Some people are even of opinion that he was secretly attached to Christianity.

Sentiments and complaints of the Arians.

Without entering into the particulars of ecclesiastical quarrels, which were incessantly envenomed by the discord of the bishops, or the imprudence and cabals of the court, it will be sufficient to make one important remark. The Arians took refuge in deceitful subtilties. In appearance they confessed the divinity of the word; they said he was like the father, ὁμοιουσιος; but they obstinately rejected the word consubstantial, ὁμοουσιος, complaining, that the Christian world was set in a flame for a syllable, for a word not to be found in Scripture, as if that word had not expressed the thing itself, and been rendered sacred by the judgment of the church.

Councils of Rimini and Constantinople.

The council of Rimini, in 359, composed of four hundred bishops, more than three fourths

of whom were Catholics, after having at first refused to make any alteration in the Nicene creed, being at last intimidated by the mandates of the court, admitted a formulary, bearing, that the Son *is, in every thing, like the Father*. This example was followed by that of Seleucia, which was afterwards transferred to Constantinople. 'The subscriptions that were every where exacted,' says Fleury, 'raised great disturbances in the church. It was a kind of persecution more dangerous than that of the Pagans, because it sprung up in her bosom. Almost all subscribed to the error, even though they disbelieved it. Only a very small number were exempted; either because they had resolution enough to refuse compliance, or were too obscure to attract notice. All the rest yielded to the torrent; some sooner, some later, through motives of fear, self-interest, or ignorance. The pretence of maintaining peace and submission to the will of the emperor, induced almost all the prelates to join the Arian communion;' * but the resolution of the Hilarys and Athanasiuses, was not to be overcome; and the Nicene faith, after so many storms, at last prevailed.

Overweening zeal of some holy bishops.

It is to be wished, that the ardency of their zeal had not sometimes prompted them to a conduct destructive of the faith, and inconsistent with the respect due to the sovereign. Some holy prelates wrote severe invectives against Constantius, which they addressed to himself; and these were commended and imitated by others. † A first example, as is com-

* Hist. Ecclesiast. l. 14. † Fleury, et l'Hist. de l'Eglise Gallicane.

monly the case, produced others of a more dangerous nature. In their eyes, a prince, who favoured heresy, was no longer clothed with the imperial majesty; though, formerly, it had been acknowledged even in the tyrants who persecuted Christianity.

Less submission was paid to the prince than formerly.

This diversity of conduct proceeded from the difference of situation. The bishops had most of them been loaded with riches and honours by Constantine; and, being provoked by the mortifications and uneasiness given them by his son, whose character was far from ensuring him respect, and inflamed by the disputes on religion, which were carried on with excessive acrimony, they naturally transgressed the bounds of their primitive modesty. The most virtuous suffered themselves to be hurried away by zeal; the others were elated with their influence over the minds of the people. Some, courtly and fawning, gave themselves up to intrigue and the pursuits of ambition; while others thought they honoured God by defying their sovereigns.

Audacity of Leontius of Tripoli.

Leontius of Tripoli was audacious enough to refuse paying a respectful visit to the empress Eusebia. He prescribed the ceremonial which he expected should be used on that occasion. 'When I enter, she shall immediately rise and advance to meet me; she shall bow low to receive my blessing. When I am seated, she shall modestly continue standing till I give her a sign to sit down.' The empress demanded satisfaction for this insult; but the emperor dreading, that he, too, should be exposed to some affront, commended the conduct of the bishop.

The emperor the cause of the mischief.

The greatest part of the mischiefs which infested the church, and necessarily reverted upon society, were occasioned by the weakness and imprudence of this prince. Under a wise emperor the disputes would have been less violent, or at least the supreme authority would not have been brought into contempt.

JULIAN.

CHAPTER I.

GOVERNMENT OF JULIAN. HIS ENDEAVOURS TO DESTROY CHRISTIANITY.

361. Julian acknowledged emperor.

The moment that the death of Constantius was made public, all hearts were turned to Julian. The fame of his exploits and virtues attracted the veneration of the public. The event which gave him peaceable possession of the throne was even looked upon as supernatural, and he was received at Constantinople with equal joy and respect. He celebrated the funeral of the deceased emperor with magnificence, and affected to lament his death, though it is impossible his regret should have been sincere. One of his first cares was to erect a chamber of justice for the punishment of those who should be convicted of having abused their credit under the last reign. Three celebrated informers, Paul, Apodemus, and the eunuch Eusebius, who

was great chamberlain, were condemned to the flames, and this act of severity met with universal applause. But the public censured some arbitrary sentences, which, as almost constantly happens on such occasions, fell upon innocent persons.

Reforms the household.

Numberless abuses called aloud for reformation, especially in the emperor's household, where a multitude of useless officers preyed upon the substance of the state. There were a thousand barbers, a thousand cooks, and the rest in proportion, all insatiable and unprincipled men, who spared nothing to gratify their luxury and rapacity. The public treasure was swallowed up in this bottomless gulf; nor was it long before Julian perceived it. Having sent for a barber, and seeing a man enter magnificently dressed, *I wanted a barber*, said he, *not a senator*. This man, besides a considerable salary and large gratifications, had twenty servants, and as many horses, kept for him at the emperor's expense. All the barbers were discharged except one, and *even he*, said the prince, *is superfluous to a man who wears his beard*. He did the same by the eunuchs, and all the officers whom he thought unnecessary.

Applies himself to promote the public good.

Perhaps this reformation was principally directed by an extravagance of philosophy. But the people ought to think themselves happy in having such a philosopher for their sovereign, rather than a master who would lavish their money in vain parade. He protected them against the oppression of the financiers and the licentiousness of the soldiery; and administered justice with equal care and despatch. This he thought an indispensable duty, and in every de-

termination aimed only at the good of the subjects. He was a great enemy to flattery; and being one day highly applauded by the lawyers for his sentence in a certain cause, *I should be proud of those encomiums*, said he, *if I thought they who bestowed them would have been bold enough to censure me had I given a contrary decision.* It was one of his principal maxims of government, *that the ancient laws and customs ought to be rigidly observed, unless some great public benefit obliges to a deviation;* a maxim which, though generally true, he falsely applied to Christianity.

Modesty of Julian, in regard to the consuls.

Among striking marks of wisdom, we see in this prince an affectation of modesty, sometimes unbecoming his rank. In general, he carried things in themselves laudable to a faulty excess. It was customary for the emperor to attend the new consuls to the senate; and Mamertinus and Nevitus, who had been graced with that title, coming to the palace on the day appointed for the ceremonial, Julian went to meet them, received them in their litter, asked their orders for setting out, placed them with his own hands in the curule chair, and walked before them in the middle of the crowd. His panegyric, pronounced by Mamertinus, is still extant. It is an ingenious piece of flattery, but such as ought not to have been pleasing to philosophic ears. However, custom had made those addresses of adulation too frequent; and even Trajan had listened to his own praises from the mouth of Pliny.

Honours paid to the philosopher Maximus.

One day, when the emperor was haranguing the senate, he was informed of the arrival of the philosopher Maximus from Ionia; upon which he rose abruptly, embraced him, and,

having ushered him into the house, loaded him with praises, paid him all the honours due from a pupil to an old master, whose lessons deserved the most lively acknowledgments; and, after the senate was dismissed, walked out with him, hand in hand. The invitations of the prince crowded the palace with a multitude of sophists, men altogether unworthy of his consideration; and the philosophic garb became a cloak for ambition and self-interest. True philosophers are always rare, even when they are respected.

He purposes to abolish Christianity.

Julian had long hated Christianity, which he abjured the moment that he was invested with the sovereignty. His chief aim was to destroy that sublime religion, because he regarded it as destructive of the public weal; doubtless confounding the religion itself with the abuses which had crept into it from the passions and prejudices of men. He was instigated to this attempt by his philosophers, who, for the most part, advised violent measures; but these were equally repugnant to his principles and disposition. He had too much humanity to expose himself to the reproach of tyranny, and too much good sense not to know the inutility and hazard of a sanguinary persecution. He therefore formed his plan with the most profound policy, and, without openly persecuting the worshippers of Jesus Christ, did more mischief to his religion than all those who had let loose their rage against it.

Libanius on this subject.

'He knew,' says Libanius,* 'that all attempts to force consciences are fruitless; that

* Or. 13.

bodily distempers may sometimes be cured by tying down the patients, but neither sword nor fire can destroy belief. If the hand offers sacrifice, the heart disowns it, charges the body with weakness, and persists in its sentiments. Men do not change their opinions, but only pretend to change them. These hypocrites afterwards ask forgiveness of the party they have effected to abandon; and they who have perished under punishment receive divine honours.' If we may judge from this passage, Libanius deserved the emperor's esteem; and that prince actually made use of his counsels and his pen.

Julian, a zealous observer of the Pagan rites.

Let us take a particular view of Julian's conduct in an affair of such delicacy. In quality of high priest, he set the example of the religion he proposed to reestablish, zealously performed the functions of his office in presiding at the Pagan ceremonies, showed the most profound reverence for the gods, and thus inspired superstitious minds with the same sentiments of devotion, while others made it a duty apparently to imitate him.

He joins to them the precepts of morality.

A religion without morality, when closely examined, appears contemptible. This essential defect gave the Christians a very great advantage over the Pagans, whom they reproached with being obliged to borrow from philosophy the idea and knowledge of those duties which it is the business of religion to inculcate and prescribe. Julian was compelled to own the excellency of the Christian religion in this respect, and used his utmost endeavours to introduce morality into Paganism. He ordered its precepts to be joined to the ceremonial of worship, and publicly taught; above all, zealously

enforcing the practice of that charity by which Christians are distinguished.

Prescribes rules of virtue to the priests.

As the example of the priests has much greater influence over the people than their discourses, he exhorted them, in his writings, to observe a conduct worthy of their office, and draws up a plan for that purpose, in which he goes so far as to forbid them to read certain books, which, says he, *gradually kindle the flame of the passions.* He requires of them the love of the gods and of mankind as the principal duties of their profession. He commands them to be respected, but, at the same time, to make themselves respectable. He describes their important functions, by calling them *the interpreters of the will of the gods to men, and the guarantees of the conduct of men towards the gods.* According to him, they never ought to visit the great, or men in authority, except to plead the cause of the poor, the widow, and the orphan.

Turns the Christians into ridicule.

While he thus endeavoured to bring idolatry again into credit, he took every means tacitly to undermine Christianity. Fully persuaded, that ridicule and contempt are more effectual means for accomplishing this purpose than the inflicting of tortures, he forbade the Galileans, by which name he called the disciples of Jesus Christ, to be ill treated on account of their religion, *because*, said he, *they are rather objects of compassion than hatred; they wander in the dark on the most essential points, and abandon the worship of the gods to adore the remains of carcasses, and the bones of dead men.* He recalled to Constantinople all those who had been banished by Constantius, whether Catholics or Arians; and restored the churches to the bishops, with a

view to rekindle among them those fatal dissensions which had been productive of so many mischiefs; *for he knew*, saith Ammianus Marcellinus, in hyperbolical and emphatic expression, *he knew that savage beasts show less cruelty to mankind, than Christians generally displayed in their disputes with one another.*

He opposes moderation to outrage.

He opposed an apparent moderation to the violence of false zeal, and thus turned its excesses to his advantage. Maris of Chalcedon, an old man, of the Arian sect, who had lost his sight, having publicly insulted him at a sacrifice, *Be silent, thou miserable blind wretch*, said the emperor to him, *the Galilean, thy God, will not restore thee to thy sight.—I thank him*, replied the bishop, *for sparing me the pain of beholding an apostate like thee;* to which Julian made no reply, but continued the sacrifice.

Prohibits the Christians from teaching literature.

The Christians had some men of abilities, who, employing themselves as teachers of literature and the sciences, took that opportunity of insinuating the belief of their religion into the minds of their pupils, and decrying Paganism. They were formidable enemies to the philosophers, and defended the truth with the same arms with which these attacked it. In order to deprive them of this advantage, and render them contemptible by their ignorance, they were prohibited by the emperor from teaching grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy; under this pretence, that, as they did not believe the religious doctrine of the Greeks, they could not, without being guilty of a shameful imposture, make use of the books which contained those tenets. The same edict permitted the Christians to attend the schools; but of this privi-

lege they were afterwards deprived by a counter edict, because *for them the gospel ought to be sufficient;* a prohibition which Ammianus blames as a piece of cruelty, but, however, was well calculated for producing its effect. In the sequel, we shall have too frequent opportunities of seeing how prejudicial ignorance may be to religion; and Julian's policy suggested to him a method which could scarcely fail of answering his purpose.

He practises a thousand methods to debase them.

Self-interest being the great mover of the human heart, the emperor made that his principal engine against Christianity. All favours and dignities were bestowed exclusively upon idolators; the faithful were abandoned to contempt and oppression. He revoked the privileges of the clerks, abolished the distributions established by Constantine for their benefit, and that of widows and virgins, obliged the Christians to rebuild the temples at their own expense, and excluded them from all employments, telling them, that, by their law, they were forbidden to use the sword; the courts of justice were shut against them, because the same law condemned suits and quarrels. If they complained of being taxed above their proportion by the governors, his answer was, *Doth not the gospel teach you to despise the good things of this world, and to suffer wrong with patience?* He seized an opportunity of pillaging the opulent church of Edessa, in order *to facilitate to the Galileans the path to the kingdom of heaven.* He made difference in religion a sufficient reason for divorce, which was an easy method for increasing the number of apostates. In a word, he set in motion all the springs of refined policy against a set of men

whom he wanted to seduce and pervert, but was unwilling to honour with martyrdom.

The zeal of some Christians censured as violent measures.

The indiscreet and rash zeal of a number of Christians, who overthrew the altars, statues, and even temples, or, by their tumults, violated the public peace, occasioned an effusion of blood in the provinces. 'In several places,' says the Abbé de la Bleterie, 'especially in the East, where the passions are inflamed by the climate, the Pagans, elated with their present good fortune, insulted the Christians, who, less mindful of the rules prescribed by the gospel than of their past prosperity, returned injury for injury, and insult for insult. From words they came to blows, and from blows to sedition.' It is not to be wondered, therefore, if the governors of provinces, who were enemies to Christianity, carried their severity beyond the limits prescribed to them. But, notwithstanding the assertions of some respectable authors, it may be doubted, whether, in this point, they conformed to the secret inclinations of the prince. The infliction of punishment, merely for the sake of religion, was certainly contrary to his views, and the plan he had so artfully laid down.

Julian's superstition.

But no doubt can be entertained of his being led into the most absurd practices by a blind superstition. He sacrificed numberless victims, and, if he had lived longer, bade fair for destroying the breed of cattle. This is the expression of Ammianus himself, who assures us, that the expense of celebrating the sacrifices, and performing the ceremonies, became burdensome to the state; that the soldiers almost every day feasted upon the flesh of the obla-

tions; that they drank to excess, especially the Gauls, and were then guilty of every kind of licentiousness. St Chrysostom asserts, that, during the religious ceremonies, the emperor was accompanied by crowds of debauchees; and St Gregory of Nazianzum accuses him of secret abominations, of nocturnal sacrifices, where human blood was shed. But, as has been remarked by the Abbé de la Bleterie, 'We ought not easily to credit discoveries published after the death of Julian, when the hatred of the public had not yet subsided; and sometimes popular report furnishes tales so well contrived, as to deceive authors the least inclined to impose upon their readers.' I shall add an observation still more striking. St Gregory, while pouring out invectives against Julian, speaks of Constantius, not only as an excellent prince, but as a saint. If we consider the circumstances, this partiality is easily accounted for, especially in a work of eloquence. It ought to be a lesson to the reader to be cautious in forming a judgment. It argues great ignorance of human nature, to be surprised at seeing the most respectable men sometimes giving way to prejudice; and he must be a foe to justice and humanity, who will not fairly weigh the reasons, that, in such cases, weaken their testimony.

CHAPTER II.

PERSIAN WAR. END OF THE REIGN OF JULIAN.

362. War against the Persians.

DURING these attempts to destroy Christianity, the emperor was laying the plan of a great enterprise against the Persians. His intention was to revenge upon Sapor the injuries done to the Roman name; and, by his economy, the wisdom of his administration, and the terror with which the barbarians had been struck by the success of his arms, he was enabled to carry the war into the heart of Asia. He set out from Constantinople in the year 362. The western provinces were scarcely sensible of his absence, and remained in profound tranquillity till his death; his very name being sufficient to curb those fierce and rapacious nations, who incessantly threatened the empire. Sapor having sent proposals of peace, he threw down the letter with contempt, saying, that *he would soon give an answer in person.* He was a hero incapable of weakness; but what hero can reckon upon his fortune?

Public calamities.

The public calamities with which the empire was then afflicted were a kind of prelude to the ill success of this expedition. Nicomedia, which, a short time before, had suffered severely by an earthquake, was entirely destroyed by a new shock. Several other cities met with the same fate, and some were swallowed up by the sea. An excessive drought was succeeded by a pesti-

lence and famine, which Julian endeavoured to remedy, by fixing provisions at a low price. He caused considerable quantities of corn to be imported; but the dealers abandoned a trade by which they could not make sufficient profit; and some rich avaricious men privately purchased all the grain, in order to sell it again at an excessive rate; which furnishes a remarkable instance in favour of a free trade. Antioch, where the emperor then resided, was filled with complaints and murmurs against his conduct.

Julian insulted at Antioch.

The inhabitants of this city, who, except a very few, professed the Christian religion, though their manners were licentious, and their dispositions frivolous; judging of men by their appearance; fond of show, magnificence, and pleasures; regardless of merit, or rather openly despising it; derided a prince who had turned his court into a school of philosophy, and the austerity of whose manners they looked upon as a censure of their licentiousness. Their malignant wit was excited by his air of rusticity, his train of philosophers, his superstitious devotion, and, above all, his long and shaggy beard; for in this respect he imitated the practice of the philosophers. They turned him into ridicule, and had the insolence to insult him with satirical libels.

He revenges himself by a satire.

He revenged himself only by writing a satire, which, though just, was unsuitable to his dignity. This work is still extant, under the title of *Misopogon*, or the hater of the beard. In it he affects to censure his own conduct, and reproach himself with a thousand faults, in order to give a more lively picture of the

disorders which prevailed in Antioch. His performance was answered, and he made no reply; but when he quitted the place, he declared that he would never again enter its walls. He appointed Alexander its governor, a man of inflexible and turbulent disposition. *I know well*, said the emperor, *that Alexander does not deserve a government, but Antioch deserves such a governor.* This was an acknowledgment that his choice was directed by passion; it was a deviation from those principles of wisdom which did honour to his philosophy.

He pardons some assassins.

Several laudable actions afterwards done by him deserve the highest encomiums. Ten Christian soldiers having entered into a plot to assassinate him, he contented himself with dismissing them, after a severe reprimand. Having found among his baggage a large stock of wines and other liquors, he said, *A soldier ought only to drink the wine he gains by his sword; I am a soldier, and do not desire to be treated better than others;* and rejected, with indignation, those superfluities of luxury. In a speech to his troops, he declared, that in time of war he required a ready obedience; but when that was at an end, *was far from being jealous of the privilege of princes, who substitute their arbitrary pleasure instead of reason and justice; that he would allow every person to demand of him an account of his conduct, and be ready to satisfy them.* Always setting an example of assiduity, patience, and valour, he infused a spirit of heroism into his soldiers, and showed himself a skilful general in the management of them. Here it is that he appears really the great man.

After a dangerous march through Assyria, he advanced to the banks of the Tigris. On this side of the river stood the city of Coche, near the ruins of the famous Seleucia; on the other was Ctesiphon, the capital of the Persian empire. If the Roman fleet sailed from the Euphrates into the Tigris below Ctesiphon, it would be exposed to inevitable destruction, and the army be entirely unprovided with necessaries for the siege. A knowledge of history was on that occasion of no small service to the emperor. He knew that a canal had formerly been drawn between those rivers, which he discovered after a painful search, though no traces of it at that time remained. It was then cleared, and the fleet sailed through it.

363. He advances to the banks of the Tigris.

However, this did not facilitate his passage over the Tigris. The banks were steep, and lined with troops and armed elephants, the sight of which struck a panic into the soldiers. In order to dissipate their fears, Julian celebrated military games, at the same time that he was making preparations, and ordering the embarkation, which was performed under favour of the night. The Persians set fire to the first vessels that crossed. *Courage*, cried the emperor, *we are masters of the bank, that flame is the signal I ordered to be given.* The army believed him, resumed courage, passed the river in confidence of victory, which they gained, after an obstinate engagement, pillaged the enemy's camp, and more than ever admired the genius of their leader.

He passes the river.

Ctesiphon had always been regarded as fatal to the Roman power; and the most experienced officers were against laying siege to it, because

Abandons the design of besieging Ctesiphon.

Sapor was advancing with his main army. Besides, Arbaces king of Armenia, and two generals, who were expected with a reinforcement, had not yet come up. Julian having no hopes of being able to take the city without their assistance, resolved to go and meet them, and accordingly marched up the Tigris. But, being misled by the treacherous advice of a deserter, he burned his fleet, and entangled himself in the interior parts of the country, where he soon met with desert plains, in which he was obliged at once to combat against famine and the Persians.

Sapor attacks him in his retreat.

In this dreadful situation he deliberated on a retreat, and determined to advance towards Corduene, a province on the south of Armenia; but Sapor, at the head of the Persians, harassed his march, which was one continued succession of skirmishes. The Romans were almost constantly victorious, but already felt the horrors of famine; and a storm intervening, the Persians, although discouraged, seized that opportunity of making a last effort. Julian, though he had not time to put on his armour, fought with his usual bravery, and flew to every quarter where the danger was most pressing. Being wounded with a javelin in the liver, he fell, but soon after mounted on horseback; however, growing faint with the loss of blood, he caused himself to be carried to his tent, crying out, that his wound was not mortal; and the moment it was dressed, was eager to return to the field; but his strength failed, and he perceived his end approaching.

His courageous death.

The death of this hero was as surprising as his life. In a long discourse addressed to his

friends, he expressed his joy at finding his soul ready to be disengaged from the ties of the body; thanked God for not having suffered him to perish by a conspiracy, a lingering disease, or the sword of a tyrant. He assured them, that after having lived a guiltless life, in the exercise of his duty, a foe to despotism, and a zealous friend to the public good, he received a death so glorious as a favour from heaven; *for*, said he, *it argues equal cowardice to wish for death before it comes, and to fear it when it is unavoidable.* He refused to name his successor, but referred the choice to his friends; and added, that as a good citizen, he wished to be succeeded by a man worthy of the sovereignty; after which he expired, at the age of thirty-one.

Ammianus the best historian of this prince.

The popular tales concerning Julian's death, which have been propagated by a mistaken zeal, deserve no more credit than the infamous crimes and acts of cruelty with which it has been endeavoured to blacken his memory, though that be sufficiently tarnished by his hatred against Christianity. * Ammianus was an eyewitness of the transactions; and his narration bears the stamp of truth. Though an admirer of Julian, he does not dissemble his faults, his vanity, his superstition, and his propensity to satire. He censures some parts of his conduct towards the Christians. His impartiality has even misled some modern literati, who, as has been already remarked, believed

* Among many other absurdities, the following is worth notice. The unknown author of the acts of St Theodoret, who pretends to have followed the emperor, says, that the enemy's army consisted of angels in a human form.

him a favourer of Christianity. On the authority of this estimable historian, we may therefore securely rest our judgment of a hero, who, notwithstanding his foibles, would have excited universal admiration by the qualities of his head and heart, had not his apostasy rendered him an object of detestation to the Christians of his own times. Had he protected the true religion, what praises would they not have bestowed on him, when a holy bishop, in order to depreciate his character, thought himself authorized to celebrate Constantius, who was a professed Arian and a bad prince?

The writings of Julian.

As an author, Julian deserves the preference to most of his cotemporaries. The most curious of his works are the *Satire of the Cæsars* and the *Misopogon*. He wrote another against Christianity, of which only some fragments are extant, quoted in the refutation of it by St Cyril of Alexandria. The later Platonists borrowed many of the Christian doctrines, which they endeavoured to veil under the absurd allegories of polytheism. Their gods were only genii, subordinate to the Supreme Being, which specious doctrine probably deluded this uncommon genius, and rendered him the dupe of their absurd superstitions.

His eulogium of philosophers

His letter to Themistius is a striking proof of his esteem for philosophy. 'By forming three or four philosophers,' says he, 'you may do mankind more real service than could be done by a number of emperors. The philosopher plays an important part on the theatre of the world. You say that he is capable of giving advice which may be useful to the state; he does more, he gives good examples. His dis-

courses are supported by his actions. As he is himself what he desires other men should be, his conduct is more persuasive and efficacious than the mandates of those who can only command.' This eulogium could be justified only by the practice of philosophy. But in that age, where could a Socrates or a Phocion be found?

Boldness of Libanius the sophist.

Libanius enjoyed the principal share in Julian's friendship. That famous sophist taught at Antioch when the emperor came to that city; however, he did not present himself at court. *I was his friend*, said he, *not his flatterer*. Julian, piqued at his coldness, wrote to him a billet, filled with raillery and reproach, to which he received an answer, written on the same billet, and nearly in the same style. He invited the sophist to dinner.—*I do not dine*, replied the latter.—*Then we will sup together.—I have a headach, I cannot.—At least come and see me often.—I will come when sent for; I am afraid of being troublesome.* This boldness was not displeasing to the emperor, who continued his intimacy with Libanius during his whole life.

Project of rebuilding the temple of Jerusalem.

No fact is better known in ancient history than the unsuccessful attempt made by this prince to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem. Ammianus says, that he was prompted to this undertaking by a desire of immortalizing his name by great works, and that the workmen were stopped by volumes of flame which burst out of the earth at different times.

The Christian authors ascribe this attempt to another motive, and say his design was to deprive Christianity of the proof drawn from the dispersion of the Jews, and the destruction

of their temple. They add a great number of miraculous circumstances, a particular account of which may be seen in our ecclesiastical historians. We know not any miracle better attested, says the learned Fleury.

JOVIAN.

363. Jovian elected emperor.

THE death of Julian was followed by a general consternation. The victorious army was in want of every necessary, in the middle of the enemy's country, and the race of Constantius Chlorus was entirely extinct. Sallust, præfect of the East, refused the empire, and advised putting off the election till the army in Mesopotamia could concur in it. But a head was wanted, and the choice fell upon Jovian, captain of the guards, called *Domestic*, who, though young, addicted to the pleasures of the table, to wine and women, showed himself possessed of many excellent qualities, which might one day compensate his faults.

Makes a dishonourable peace with Sapor.

Sapor sent him proposals of peace, either because he dreaded urging the Romans to despair, or designed, by amusing them with the hopes of a treaty, to reduce them to the extremity of famine. Jovian immediately despatched deputies to the Persian camp. Four days were passed in negociations, during which the march of the army was discontinued; though, according to Ammianus, they might in that

time have reached Corduene, where they would have enjoyed abundance and security. The famine was become insupportable, when Sapor demanded the restitution of the five provinces on the Tigris, which had been ceded by his great grandfather Narsés to Galerius; and likewise insisted upon being put in possession of Nisibis, Singara, and some other places in Mesopotamia. These dishonourable conditions were accepted; and the empire was, for the first time, dismembered.

Retreat of the Romans.

Jovian repassed the Tigris, without having had the prudence to stipulate for a supply of provisions from the Persians. For six days his troops were obliged to feed upon the flesh of their camels, and other beasts of burden. The inhabitants of Nisibis, who had thrice baffled the attempts of Sapor, earnestly entreated permission to defend themselves. But the emperor, faithful to his engagements, forced them to evacuate the place, and his disgrace was increased by their despair. Julian would, doubtless, have preferred a glorious death to so ignominious a peace.

The emperor insulted at Antioch.

We may form an idea of the general indignation by the conduct of the people of Antioch. Though Jovian was a zealous Christian, and the news of his predecessor's death had been received by the Christians in that city with the most indecent joy, the people, far from receiving him with the usual applauses, loaded him with satire, and would even have broken out into a violent sedition, had they not been somewhat calmed by the præfect Sallustius.

He protects Christianity.

However, this prince's stay at Antioch was consecrated to the public good; and he gave

proofs of real wisdom, by healing the wounds of the church, without disturbing the state, or offering violence to conscience. The Pagans were the more turbulent, as false zeal had immediately broken out, overthrown the altars, and insulted and menaced the partisans of idolatry. But Jovian was sensible, that force, in matters of religion, is a species of tyranny equally absurd and odious, which, instead of enlightening the mind, fills it with aversion, and produces hypocrisy, a greater evil than error. He, therefore, left to every one the free exercise of his religion, restored the privileges of the churches and clerks, and revived the ancient distributions of corn, which, however, he reduced to one third during the dearth. He recalled St Athanasius from banishment, who had always been looked upon with detestation by the Arians as their most formidable enemy. In a council held at Antioch, where the Nicene faith was confirmed, the emperor declared his intention to molest no man for his belief, and to favour all attempts to reconcile the jarring spirits. The heretics caballed without surprising him, and the Catholics triumphed without persecution. His conduct deserves to be quoted as a model, for it met with universal applause.

He dies in Asia.

The empire had the prospect of a just and pacific reign. Jovian was impatiently expected at Constantinople and Rome, and he was eager to receive the homage of his subjects in those two cities; for which purpose he set out from Antioch in the month of December. But his good fortune vanished like a flash of lightning.

While on his journey through Galatia, he was found dead in his bed, having, probably, been suffocated by the vapour of charcoal with which his chamber had been warmed. At his death he was only thirty-three years of age. Although his reign was too short, it may be looked upon as having been of great advantage to Christianity. Had the successor of Julian, like him, professed idolatry, and prosecuted his plan of policy for the destruction of the Christian religion, two examples of this kind would, perhaps, have drawn on others; and a third Pagan emperor would probably have extended the mischief wide. It is a miracle, in the order of Providence, to see the most mortifying religion establish itself in the midst of obstacles, notwithstanding the faults and dissensions of its followers.

VALENTINIAN I. EMPEROR IN THE WEST. VALENS IN THE EAST.

After an interregnum of some days, the army, then encamped at Nice, in Bithynia, chose for emperor Valentinian, who had stopped at Ancyra. His father, Gratian, was a native of Pannonia, of an obscure family, who, by his valour and uncommon strength of body, had raised himself from the rank of a common soldier to the dignity of count of Africa. The son, tread- 364. Valentinian proclaimed by the army.

ing in his steps, had acquired reputation in the army, and, though illiterate, excessively severe, and too avaricious, distinguished himself by virtues worthy of the throne.

Desired to name a colleague.

As soon as he was invested with the ensigns of his dignity, the soldiers required him, with loud clamours, to name a colleague, that the empire might no more be exposed to the misfortune of remaining without a head. Not in the least intimidated by this sedition, he thus addressed the troops: 'It was in your power,' said he to them, 'to have made another emperor; but as I am by your choice raised to that dignity, it is now my province to command, and yours to obey. I do not refuse to take a colleague; but I reserve to myself the right of choosing, at such an opportunity as I shall think proper, a man worthy of you and of me.' This discourse imposed silence on the mutineers; and, a short time after, Valentinian named his brother Valens, Augustus; in which he certainly less regarded the public good than the interest of his family. One of his captains had frankly said to him, if you have a regard for your family, you have a brother; if you love the state, choose the most deserving; an advice by which he ought to have profited.

Division of the empire.

The barbarians having no longer a Julian to fear, had put themselves in motion, and renewed their incursions. The Alemains poured into Gaul and Rhætia (the counties of Tyrol, Trent, &c.), the Quadi and Sarmatians into Pannonia, the Picts and Scots into the Roman territories in Britain, the Goths into Thrace, a number of Moorish tribes into the provinces of Africa; and Sapor, thinking himself freed from all

engagements by the death of Jovian, attempted the conquest of Armenia, which had formerly been a part of the Persian empire. In order to make head against so many enemies, the two emperors divided their dominions. Valens had the East, *i. e.* Egypt, Asia, and Thrace; Valentinian reserving the West to himself, not that he preferred Rome to Constantinople, as might be imagined; for, after the time of Constantius, the emperor had ordinarily resided at Milan, as being situated almost in the centre of his dominions.

Financial regulations of Valentinian.

During those times of confusion, one of the most essential measures was the recruiting of the public treasury, which had been exhausted by the Persian war, and the maintenance of internal tranquillity, which was incessantly disturbed by the differences of religion. For this purpose, Valentinian made several political regulations. He declared, that no person should be exempted from contributing towards the expenses of the war against the barbarians; that the officers of his household and the magistrates ought even to set an example of zeal as well as the clergy, whose peculiar profession it is to relieve the miserable. It is observed, that Constantius had exempted the clerks from this tax precisely for the same reason, saying, that their gain would turn to the profit of the poor. But what was the consequence, if self-interest happened to be stronger than charity?

The free gifts of the cities changed into tribute.

The presents made on some occasions to the emperors by the cities had been considerably lessened by Julian, who always looked upon them as free gifts; but Valentinian converted them into a fixed tribute, from which none were

exempted except the senators. Perhaps necessity made him secure this fund of supply. One thing may be alleged in his favour, that he published severe laws against extortion; the oppressions of the collectors of the public revenue being often more burdensome to the people than the taxes themselves.

Toleration granted by Valentinian.

His conduct with regard to the object of next importance was regulated by the dictates of prudence. Though a Christian, and determined Catholic, he tolerated Paganism, the proscription of which would have occasioned violent commotions. The priests were left in full possession of their privileges; he even promised rewards to those who filled their station in an exemplary manner. He suffered the Romans to keep their altar dedicated to Victory, for which they showed so great a predilection. With regard to the philosophers, whose numbers had prodigiously increased during the reign of Julian, he ordered those whose lives were unsuitable to their profession to return to their own country; because it *is shameful*, to use his own expressions, *for men who boast of being proof against the attacks of misfortune, not to have sufficient resolution to share with their countrymen the weight of the public offices.*

He honours and restrains the clergy.

He made it a point of duty not to intermeddle in theological disputes, leaving to the bishops all doctrinal matters, and concerning himself only with what affected the political order of society. If he banished St Hilary of Poitiers from Milan, it was owing to the troubles excited by the zeal of that ecclesiastic against the bishop of the city, who was accused of Arian-

ism. Though the emperor entertained the highest veneration for the episcopal character, he opposed a barrier to the avidity of the clergy, secular and regular, by prohibiting them from frequenting the houses of widows and orphans, and confiscating all donations, even legacies made to them by women, under a pretence of their being employed for pious uses. After the example of Constantine, he enacted, that no man, capable of bearing public offices, should be admitted into the body of the clergy. Had wise precautions been taken at the beginning, the disagreeable necessity of passing such laws would have been prevented.

Under such a government, religious quarrels seemed extinct, and orthodoxy thereby gained great advantages. Valens, on the contrary, who was a violent Arian, and of a merciless disposition, persecuted the Catholics, without being able firmly to establish his own sect.

Defenders established in the towns.

Both princes adopted a laudable measure in causing some of the principal inhabitants of every town to be chosen, under the title of *defenders*, for the protection of the weak, the preservation of order and justice, the correction of abuses and oppression, not by a coercive power, which they had not in their hands, but by remonstrances, judicial procedures, and appeals to superior tribunals. It unfortunately happens, that the more prevalent disorders are in a state, the less effectually can such offices be exercised.

365. Tyranny of Valens.

While Valentinian was employed in Gaul against the Alemains, who, not having received the usual presents, or rather tribute, had crossed the Rhine, and were ravaging the country,

Valens was on the point of being dethroned. Procopius, a relation of Julian, had disappeared after the death of that prince, because he was suspected of aiming at the purple. In his retirement, he was informed of the general disaffection to Valens, who was already represented as a second Tiberius, because his father-in-law, Petronius, was another Sejanus. The tyranny of the ancient emperor seemed to be revived, by an edict, subjecting to capital punishment, not only the authors of defamatory libels, but all in whose possession they were found.

Procopius attempts to dethrone him.

Though Procopius had neither the genius nor resolution requisite for the conduct of great enterprises, his first attempts were attended with success. Being proclaimed emperor by a few cohorts, he made himself master of Constantinople and Thrace without any difficulty, and even seized upon Cyzicus, the capital of the countries on the eastern coast of the Hellespont; but the following year, by the treachery of his generals, of whose services he showed himself unworthy, he was defeated in Phrygia, and delivered up to the emperor, by whom he was immediately put to death.

Wars with the Alemains.

Valentinian was too much employed in the war with the Alemains to be able to lend his brother any assistance. Jovinus, an excellent general, who commanded in that war, attacked the barbarians, when their army was divided, defeated them in three engagements, and secured the frontiers from their incursions. One of their kings being, contrary to the laws of humanity, hanged up by the soldiers, Jovinus resolved to punish their tribune for the mur-

der, had not they protested that they alone were guilty of it.

From this period we shall see the Roman name disgraced by a thousand atrocious actions. From their mixture with the barbarians, they adopted the manners of those nations, to which they added their own vices, and were no longer startled at the commission of treachery, cruelty, and the blackest crimes. Dreading the enterprises of Vithicabus, another German king, and not being able to secure his person, they bribed one of his domestics to assassinate him. Had their ancestors pursued the same conduct, the name of Rome would scarce have been mentioned in history.

The Romans barbarous and perfidious.

Valentinian has been reproached with committing several acts of excessive rigour, bordering on tyranny. It was a maxim with him, that *severity is the soul of justice, and justice of sovereignty*. But he did not reflect that the man who is really just, is only rigid against crimes, and that excessive severity leads to injustice. The celebrated Prætextatus, præfect of Rome, a zealous Pagan, was better acquainted with those rules which men in authority ought to prescribe to themselves. His incorruptible equity was always tempered with mildness, and his decisions were invariably respected as a source of the public good. He appeased the tumults excited by the schism of Ursinus; an affair which, considering the scandal it raised in the church, deserves a particular narration.

Valentinian too severe.

368. After the death of pope Liberius, famous for having subscribed the Arian confession, Damasus was canonically elected; but the desire of

368. The see of Rome already an object of ambition.

honours and riches stirred up a rival. If we may believe Ammianus, ambitious men looked with eager desire upon that eminent station, which was formerly the post of fatigue and danger. 'They perceive,' says he, 'that it will give them an opportunity of accumulating a fortune by the liberalities of the women, that they can ride in chariots, appear in a magnificent dress, and keep a better furnished table than sovereign princes: but it were better for them did they imitate some of the bishops in the provinces, who, by their frugality, simplicity, and modesty, gain the love of the eternal Creator, and the respect of his true worshippers.'

Ursinus disputes with Damasus.

Ursinus, a deacon of the church of Rome, formed a design of depriving Damasus of the pontificate, secured a party, received ordination, and stood a siege against the papal authority and its adherents. A cathedral, in which he entrenched himself, became a theatre of war, where one hundred and thirty lives were lost. The emperor sentenced him to banishment, and Prætextatus drove out the schismatics by force of arms; but the schism was not entirely healed till several years after. This may be looked upon as a prelude to those dreadful mischiefs which ambition engendered in the bosom of the church. They certainly had even then grown to a very considerable height, as the example of so many holy bishops was not sufficient to restrain them.

Origin and settlements of the Goths.

While the West enjoyed the sweets of tranquillity under Valentinian, the East was distracted by the zeal of Valens for Arianism, at the same time that he drew upon the empire

a number of enemies capable of overturning it, and whom we shall soon see establishing their dominion in the West. These were the Goths, a people before this period renowned in history, and who deserve our particular notice.

Scandinavia

According to the opinion of the most judicious authors, the Goths originally inhabited the country of Scandinavia, at present Sweden and Norway, called by the ancients *the nursery of nations*, one province of which still retains the name of Gothland. Some centuries before the Christian era, they had emigrated in search of a settlement elsewhere, when several of their tribes, the Rugii, the Vandals, the Lombards, the Herculi, fixed their residence in Germany. In the second century, the bulk of the nation having penetrated to the coasts of the Palus Mæotis, established themselves in those regions, whence they extended their conquests with great rapidity. Under the reign of Valens they gained possession of Dacia, at present Walachia, and were distinguished by the names of Ostrogoths and Visigoths; the first inhabiting the coasts of the Euxine, and towards the mouths of the Danube, the second dwelling along the banks of that river.

Character of that people.

Being men of a fine figure, a martial disposition, sound sense, remarkable for their chastity and steadiness, they were distinguished from the herd of barbarians by their superior qualifications. Their princes bore only the title of judges, a name which they looked upon as more respectable than that of kings. Their laws were distinct, clear, and invariably observed. They are extant in the code of Theodoric, and shall be noticed afterwards. Clau-

dius II., Aurelian, Tacitus, and Probus, had stopped the progress of this conquering nation. Galerius and Constantine had used them as auxiliaries, it being stipulated that they should furnish forty thousand troops upon demand. After the death of Julian, who despised them, they began again to be formidable, and laid waste the lesser Scythia, which they only quitted in consideration of a contribution paid them for its ransom. Valens afterwards kindled the war by his imprudent conduct.

Valens makes war against them with success.

They had sent three thousand men to the assistance of Procopius, looking upon him to be the lawful emperor, because he was cousin to Julian. This corps being surrounded in their retreat, laid down their arms, and were treated as prisoners. The emperor refusing to release them, a war became unavoidable; however, it must be allowed that he *made* preparations for it with prudence. His economy furnished him with sufficient funds for carrying it on; and he was enabled even to diminish, instead of augmenting the taxes. By the superiority of his forces, he obliged the barbarians, after three campaigns, to accept the terms he was pleased to prescribe, and to engage not to pass the Danube; but, without laying aside their resentment, they only waited a more favourable opportunity; and we shall see Valens at last sink under their efforts.

Treachery of the Romans.

On the other side, Valentinian defeated the Alemains at Sultz on the Necker; and afterwards concluded a treaty, by which it was stipulated, that neither of them should invade the territories of the other. But the Romans violated their agreement, by erecting forts on

the lands of the barbarians, who, in return, cut the workmen to pieces. Thus treaties concluded with a treacherous design served only as a preparation for new scenes of massacre. The Saxons, another tribe of barbarians, who sailed up the rivers in light barks, and extended their depredations far and wide, likewise experienced the perfidy of the Romans. A truce had been granted them, with permission to retire; but they were intercepted by an ambush, in which they all perished, after defending themselves like madmen. No advantage could be reaped from such injurious conduct, unless the Romans could have exterminated innumerable nations whose revenge they provoked.

Another affair in Germany.

Soon after Macrian, king of the Alemains, raising new disturbances, Valentinian, in order to engage him in a quarrel with a foreign enemy, solicited the king of the Burgundians, a nation near the head of the river Meine, to join his forces against the common enemy. The Burgundians marched to the banks of the Rhine; but, not being joined by the Romans as they expected, flew into a rage at the disappointment, and, instead of attacking the Alemains, returned to their own country, after massacring all the subjects of the empire who fell into their hands.

Cruelty of Valentinian.

The emperor did not spare his own subjects. It is true he enacted excellent laws, but his impetuous and violent temper prompted him to acts of cruelty and injustice. A governor having solicited preferment to a better employment, *As he is not content with his present office*, cried the emperor, *I will give him another:*

Cut off his head; which order was immediately put in execution. He fed two favourite bears with the carcasses of those persons whom he caused to be put to death.

Maximin, præfect of Gaul, enjoyed the greatest share of his confidence; a man of a sanguinary temper, who had the effrontery to say, *No man must flatter himself that he is innocent, when it is my pleasure that he should be guilty.* The Romans became every day more barbarous and abandoned.

Two kings treacherously murdered by the Romans.

We shudder at beholding them treacherously imbruing their hands in the blood of princes. Para, king of Armenia, being suspected by Valens, count Trajan was employed to destroy him; and he was assassinated at an entertainment to which he had been invited. Gabinius, king of the Quadi, having made some complaints, because Valentinian had erected a fort in his territories, a son of the præfect Maximin was sent into the country with the title of duke, by whom that unsuspecting prince was in like manner invited to an entertainment, and murdered as he rose from table.

375. Death of Valentinian.

This infamous deed occasioned the emperor's death. The Quadi passed the Danube, and laid waste the country with fire and sword; when Valentinian, in return, ravaging their lands, they sent him a submissive deputation, consisting of the principal men of the nation; but their dress was so mean, and their appearance so rustic, that he took this embassy for an insult; and, straining his voice, in a fit of rage burst a vein, and soon after expired.

VALENS EMPEROR IN THE EAST. GRATIAN IN THE WEST.

GRATIAN, eldest son of Valentinian, then sixteen years of age, had borne the title of Augustus from his ninth year. This religious prince, who was a pupil of the poet Ausonius, had received a religious and polite education, rather than one p oper to qualify him for the government of an empire; and, to an excellent disposition, joined a weakness of character which might be attended with dangerous consequences. The army associated with him his brother Valentinian II., an infant of four years of age, for whom he entertained a paternal affection. Gratian begun his reign with an act of the greatest injustice; so obnoxious are princes to the commission of enormous faults, when their own judgment being insufficient to direct them, they are blindly guided by the passions of other men. The most spotless innocence was blackened to him by the intrigues of the court, and he caused the famous count Theodosius to be executed at Carthage; a man who had, a little before, suppressed a rebellion raised by an African prince; who had saved Britain; on all occasions shown himself the firmest support of the empire; and heightened the lustre of his triumphs by the modesty of his behaviour.

375. Gratian succeeds Valentinian.

Maximin justly punished.

The præfect Maximin was probably the cause of his condemnation, but he afterwards met with the like fate. Being convicted of several crimes, he was beheaded, as were two other instruments of tyranny. The emperor restored the ancient privilege of the senators, not to be put to the torture; an exemption which the barbarous Maximin had always treated with contempt.

Valens degenerates into a tyrant.

The East grew every day more unhappy under Valens. That distrustful, mean-spirited, and cruel prince, had for some time curbed or dissembled his vices. Though a persecutor of the orthodox religion, he had at least shown moderation and equity in other respects, and had gained honour by his defeat of the Goths; but, elated by some slight advantages over the Persians, he thought himself entitled to listen only to the voice of flattery, and give the rein to his passions. Every one was sacrificed against whom a calumnious report happened to be circulated, and he became inexorable in the exercise of despotism; for it was a maxim with him, *that whoever was easily appeased, easily forsook the path of justice.* Public hatred and frequent conspiracies demonstrated the falsehood of his maxim, and the injustice of his government.

Conspiracy of Theodorus cruelly punished.

So eagerly did the people desire his death, that they had recourse to magic in order to discover his successor. Theodorus, a popular man of respectable character, suffered himself to be deluded by the impostures of some pretenders to divination, who flattered him with being destined to the empire, and fell a sacrifice to his foolish credulity. This plot occasioned dreadful executions; the innocent and

guilty suffered indiscriminately; and the fictitious accusation of magic subjected to the executioner those who could not be charged with any real crime.

Maximus and other philosophers condemned.

On that occasion the fires were kindled for the punishment of philosophers, the greatest part of whom were infatuated with ridiculous visions. With their books were burnt several treatises of natural philosophy, jurisprudence, and even polite literature. The celebrated Maximus, Julian's preceptor, was beheaded at Ephesus. He owned, that he was acquainted with the oracle in favour of Theodorus; but added, that the honour of philosophy prohibited him from betraying the secret of his friends. 'His death,' says M. Le Beau, 'appeared unjust to none but the zealous partisans of idolatry.' But the crime for which he suffered was neither well authenticated, nor in its nature capital; or is it to be supposed that he ought, at such a distance of time, to have been punished for teaching Julian false doctrines?

The Huns cause a revolution in the empire.

All that the empire had hitherto suffered from the barbarians is nothing in comparison of what we are now to relate. To form a just idea of the revolution, it is necessary to be acquainted with the Huns, who, properly, were the authors of it; a nation which had struck such terror, that the historian Jornandes derives its origin from the commerce of devils with witches. The learned M. de Guignes has extracted from the Chinese books an account of them not to be found elsewhere. The Huns, a people entirely unknown in Europe, where they were one day to commit such devastations, were known in China more than two

thousand years before Christ. They inhabited a country on the north of that empire, extending five hundred leagues from west to east, where they bordered on the Mantchew Tartars, and three hundred from north to south, reaching to Tibet and the Great Wall of China.

Manners of this ferocious people.

They were a people equally hideous in their appearance, and savage in their manners, who lived upon raw roots or flesh, with no other dressing than what it received between the backs of the horses and the thighs of the riders. They looked upon every kind of close habitation as a tomb; led a roving, pastoral life in the woods and forests, carrying their families in waggons; almost continually on horseback, and never fighting on foot; of wonderful dexterity in shooting with the bow, even while they fled. They had their women in common; were unacquainted with every virtue, except an intrepid courage and uncommon fidelity to their word; made continual incursions on the territories of their neighbours, and eagerly sought every opportunity of seizing upon countries more favoured by nature than their own deserts. It was to defend China against these barbarians that the emperors built the Great Wall which extends about four hundred leagues. In a word, they were the most formidable people Tartary ever produced.

The Huns pour into Europe.

Civil wars having been kindled among them, the northern Huns were vanquished, and retired to the west. Several hords rejoined near Siberia, and, being driven to the south, by new tribes pouring into Western Tartary, passed the Wolga, and attacked the Alans, who dwelt upon the coasts of the Palus Mæotis, the sea

of Zabaché, or Asoph, a roving nation like themselves, but of better make and less savage; yet barbarians, who flead their slain enemies, and of the skin which they took off, together with the head, made housings for their horses. The Alans fled, some to the east, others to the west of the Tanais, the Don, and a third party towards the Danube. The Huns occupied the vast country between the Wolga and the Tanais, but soon quitted it in quest of other habitations.

They drive out the Alans and the Goths.

Greedy of new conquests, they crossed the Tanais, massacred the Alans and other barbarous nations, or obliged them to join their standards; drove the Ostrogoths from the Borysthenes, the Dnieper, and afterwards from the Niester. At last they attacked the Visigoths, whom they forced to retire across the Danube. 'Those nations,' says Montesquieu, 'seemed to precipitate themselves upon one another, and Asia appeared to gain new weight in order to crush Europe.'

376. The Visigoths demand leave to pass the Danube.

The Goths, whose king, Ermaneric, had extended his conquests from the Danube to the Baltic, being struck with a panic, and looking upon the Huns as monsters who devoured men, only thought of finding an asylum from their fury. With this design, the Visigoths, to the number of two hundred thousand, presented themselves on the banks of the Danube, earnestly entreating the Romans to grant them a passage, and receive them into the empire as subjects, who would spend the last drop of their blood in its defence. Messengers were despatched to know the pleasure of Valens, who, delighted with the acquisition of a nation entire-

ly consisting of soldiers, without reflecting that they might one day become formidable enemies, granted them a settlement in Thrace, on condition that they delivered up their arms before they passed the river. But the Romans were more eager to plunder than disarm them; and the greatest part of the barbarians, taking advantage of this fatal avidity, preserved their swords and javelins, for which they willingly gave up every thing else.

The Ostrogoths pass against his will.

The Ostrogoths next appeared, after having encamped for some time in the neighbourhood of the Niester. The emperor at last began to be afraid of admitting such a multitude of dangerous guests, and rejected their demand; but his troops having quitted the Danube in order to escort the new comers, whom they were anxious to remove into the interior parts of the country, they passed without opposition. Thus was the barrier thrown down between the Romans and that nation by which they had been so long menaced.

These barbarians pillage Thrace.

These barbarians being once within the limits of the empire, it was indispensably necessary to watch them carefully, and avoid giving them the least cause of provocation; but Lupicinus, Count of Thrace, observed a quite contrary conduct. He prohibited them from purchasing provisions, and, without taking any proper precautions to keep them under, drove them to the utmost pitch of fury. Under the conduct of Fritigern, they overspread Thrace like a deluge, filled it with blood and devastation, and already struck the Romans with consternation; after which, they invited the Huns and Alans, who had driven them out of their territories, to in-

crease their army and share in the spoils; for it was owing to such junctions that the barbarians sometimes became so formidable.

Valens concluded a peace with Sapor, in order to march in person to the defence of Thrace. From a groundless persuasion that the Goths would defend the empire, he had discharged the greatest part of the old troops; and levied from the provinces and cities a tax, instead of the quota of soldiers they usually furnished. In a word, he had drawn the enemy upon himself, after parting with the necessary means of defence. His army was composed of raw troops, hastily levied, at a time when he had the greatest need of brave and well disciplined forces.

Valens marches against them.

He arrived at Constantinople, the environs of which were already infested by the barbarians; and Gratian, who had defeated the Alemains, was marching in person to his aid; but, from motives of jealousy and vanity, he would not wait for his colleague, who, he was afraid, would share with him the honour of the victory. His hopes were cruelly blasted by the battle of Adrianople, in which Fritigern, joining address to bravery, cut the Roman army in pieces. Valens perished, but the circumstances of his death are unknown. It is said, that, being wounded, he retired to a cottage, which the Goths burned down, without knowing that he was in it. It is added, that the people of Antioch, to express their hatred of him, had formerly a custom of saying, by way of imprecation, *So may Valens be burned alive!* The report of this imprecation, with the burning of the cottage, was sufficient to make that account the

378. He rejects Gratian's aid, and loses the battle of Adrianople.

most current, because it approachd nearest to the marvellous.

The Goths miscarry in sieges.

Had the Goths understood the art of besieging towns, Thrace must have been entirely subdued. But they were not even acquainted with the machines necessary for that purpose; and, though accustomed to brave death, were so terrified by a large stone shot from the walls of Adrianople, that, had it not been for the interposition of their generals, they would have immediately taken flight. After fruitlessly attacking Adrianople, Perinthus, and Constantinople, they spread their ravages over a wide extent of country, and, being joined by other troops of barbarians, carried havoc into Achaia on one side, and Pannonia on the other. Fritigern, amazed at meeting with no resistance, could not help expressing his surprise at the imprudence of the Romans, who thought themselves masters of a country which they could not defend. *They unquestionably possess it*, said he, *by the same title that flocks possess the meadows where they feed.*

GRATIAN AND VALENTINIAN II. EMPERORS IN THE WEST. THEODOSIUS IN THE EAST.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE ELEVATION OF THEODOSIUS TO THE DEATH OF GRATIAN.

379. Gratian gives Theodosius the empire of the East.

GRATIAN, on his arrival at Constantinople, seeing the necessity of procuring to himself a powerful support, cast his eyes on Theodosius, the son of that great general whom he had put to death, and who, after his father's execution, had retired into Spain, where, by his conduct, he made himself equally respected and beloved. Being recalled to court, and made general of the troops, he defeated an army of Goths and Sarmatians near the Danube, and was admitted to a share of the sovereignty by the emperor, who yielded to him the empire of the East, with a considerable part of Illyria, Dacia, Mæsia, and all Greece, countries which were then wasted by the barbarians.

Character of Theodosius.

The new Augustus, who was then thirty-two years of age, by his courage and magnanimity showed himself worthy of his dignity. *For a good prince*, said he, *the essential point is not to live*

long, but to live well. His wife, Flaccilla, constantly excited him to the practice of virtue, of which she was a pattern, and often repeated to him these words: *Think of what you have been, and what you are.* Zosimus represents Theodosius as a voluptuous, unjust prince; governed by buffoons and eunuchs, who filled his court; in himself deserving no praise, and indebted for all his glory to his generals. But this author's prejudice against the Christian emperors renders his testimony very suspicious.

The barbarians admitted into the troops.

It is with more reason that he reproaches Theodosius with having doubled the commanderies, whose number was already too burdensome to the public; and receiving the barbarians into the troops, whose discipline they necessarily corrupted, at the same time that they learned the art of conquering the Romans. An immense number of Goths came from the north of the Danube to serve in the armies of the empire, the greatest part with no friendly intentions. Our judgment of Theodosius shall be determined by facts.

Zeal of Theodosius in favour of religion.

We shall here give an account of some of his first laws, which principally relate to the general order of society. Having received baptism during a dangerous distemper, with which he was seized in the second year of his reign, he employed himself seriously in advancing the interests of religion. By a law addressed to the people of Constantinople, it is enacted, that all subjects shall profess the catholic faith with regard to the article of the Trinity, and that they who do not conform, shall ignominiously be called heretics; *until*, adds he, *they shall feel the vengeance of God and our own, according as it shall*

please Divine Providence to inspire us. By another law, he ordered all criminal procedures to be stopped during the time of Lent. His reason for this was, that *the judges ought not to punish criminals at a season when they expected from God the remission of their own transgressions.* A motive less worthy of a legislator, as every act of justice is conformable to the laws of the Deity, and, in order to be effectual, ought, above all things, to be speedy. After the example of Valentinian, in honour of the festival of Easter, he granted a free pardon to all criminals, except those convicted of enormous crimes. We see that false ideas of devotion already influenced civil and political affairs. This was a great grievance, which will be found to increase in proportion as the true principles of government were neglected.

The law of retaliation against false accusers.

By a law really salutary, because it had a tendency to remedy the horrible abuse of informations, which so many princes had condemned without being able to eradicate, it was enacted, that the accuser should be detained prisoner, in order to suffer the punishment of retaliation, if the charge was found false and malicious; and that the process should be quickly brought to an issue, that the guilty person might be speedily punished, and the innocent obtain his deliverance.

Extortions checked in the provinces.

The emperor prohibited the officers sent into the provinces from making any acquisition, or receiving any present; and established excellent regulations against the extortions of the magistrates. Some of his predecessors had done the same thing, though with little advantage, because laws are good only so far as they

are executed; and, under a bad government, it is impossible to enforce them.

The laws against heretics too rigorous.

If we consider those of Theodosius, we should imagine heresy utterly extinguished. He forbids the heterodox from holding any meeting even in private houses; and, in case of transgression, permits the Catholics to use force against them. He declares apostates and manicheans incapable of making a will, or of receiving any legacy; and entertained such abhorrence against the latter, that he pronounced them worthy of death. He successively assembled a number of councils, to fix the faith which had been already fixed by a multitude of decisions. But without speaking of the vast disorders occasioned by permitting individuals to proceed to violence, we shall only observe, that these laws were so far from remedying the evil, that Theodosius was obliged to renew them every year. Not possessing a fund of knowledge sufficient to give him just ideas on that subject, he perhaps imagined that religious belief might be changed at the pleasure of an absolute master; which certainly was not the opinion of Lactantius, nor the other fathers of the church.

Gratian's conduct alienates the Pagans.

Gratian, with equal zeal, showed still less prudence. Far from imitating his father Valentinian, and supporting a worship which it was not in his power to destroy, he provoked the Pagans by his violent attacks on their religion. The altar of victory in the senate was thrown down, the revenues of the pontiffs confiscated, the privileges of the inferior priests and of the vestals withdrawn. In vain did the Pagan senators present a petition, praying a

repeal of those ordinances. The emperor, prejudiced by St Ambrose, bishop of Milan, who hoped the total ruin of idolatry, would not even admit their deputies to an audience; and their affections were still more alienated by his refusing the title of *Pontifex Maximus*, which was an appendage of the imperial dignity.

Maximus is proclaimed emperor.

Rome being afflicted by a famine, the people did not fail to attribute it to the wrath of the gods; and Gratian seeing himself become an object of hatred to his subjects, lavished his favours on the Alans, and other barbarians, whom he preferred to all offices in the court and army, and even wore their dress. A general revolt was ready to break out, and Maximus, governor of Britain, made the best use of the circumstances. His troops refusing any longer to acknowledge an emperor whom they accused of disavowing the Romans, proclaimed Maximus, and invested him with the purple, which, though he eagerly desired, yet, from a shameful hypocrisy, but often one of the favourite instruments of ambition, he seemed to accept with reluctance.

385. Gratian abandoned and murdered.

Maximus, without losing time, crossed the northern part of Gaul, and met the army of Gratian near Paris, who being abandoned by his troops, fled precipitately towards the Alps. All the cities shutting their gates against him, he put on a disguise in order to escape the pursuit of his enemies; but nowhere meeting with a faithful friend, was betrayed and murdered. Perhaps the encomiums lavished upon him by St Ambrose are in part owing to prejudice. Philostorgus, an Arian, has compared him to Nero; but by the generality of historians, he has been represented as a good emperor.

Great qualities and credit of St Ambrose.

It was a great advantage to the church that Ambrose, who was respected and beloved by the emperors, uniting to a great genius the commanding influence of the primitive virtues, made religion still more venerable by his example than authority. If we do not equally approve all his principles, and all the steps to which he was prompted by his zeal, we cannot suspect the intentions of a man, who, from a military life, was called to the episcopacy as a pattern of sanctity, and who made it a duty to sell the church plate for the relief of the needy.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE ACCOMMODATION OF VALENTINIAN II. WITH MAXIMUS, TO THE MASSACRE OF THESSALONICA.

383. Valentinian II.

VALENTINIAN II., colleague and brother of Gratian, being only twelve years of age, his mother Justina governed the empire in his name. As his tender age rendered him incapable of supporting the weight of a war, he concluded an accommodation with Maximus, who, on condition of possessing Gaul, Spain, and Britain, suffered him to retain the other provinces. Even Theodosius acknowledged the tyrant's unlawful title, because it was not yet in his power to dethrone him.

Law of Theodosius respecting marriages.

This prince, who had gained repeated victories over the barbarians, still laboured to strengthen his own authority. To the toils of

war he joined the cares of legislation; but, on some occasions, showed that he wanted a sufficient share of sagacity to entitle him to the name of a great legislator. Of this we have an instance in a law condemning to the flames cousins-german who married without a special dispensation from the emperor.

To enact so severe a punishment against alliances which had before been permitted, and, after that, still to permit them by a dispensation, was a strange inconsistency. Justinian restored the former latitude with regard to those marriages; but the canon law has adopted the regulation of Theodosius, and many new restrictions have in process of time been added.

Death of Prætextatus.

Notwithstanding so many edicts in favour of Christianity, the empire was still disturbed by the quarrels between the old and new religions. Prætextatus, whose eminent virtue made him the firmest support of idolatry, at the same time that it procured him the esteem even of the Christians, was dead; but Symmachus, the new præfect of Rome, in some degree inherited his sentiments. Several men of worthless characters being raised to dignities, this man, in a letter to Valentinian, had the courage to tell him, *that men of honour could always be found to supply the offices of state; that in order to discover them, the first step was to reject all solicitors for places, and among the rest would certainly be found people who deserved them.* M. Le Beau conjectures, that this remonstrance was answered by a rescript to Symmachus, conceived in the following terms: *It is not permitted to reason on the decisions of the sovereign; to call in question*

the merit of a man whom he hath honoured with his choice, is an offence against the majesty of the emperor. Here we see, on one side, the honest freedom of a magistrate zealous for the public weal; on the other, all the pride of despotism.

Petition of Symmachus in favour of idolatry.

Unhappily this magistrate showed himself equally a favourer of idolatry, whether he approved of it in itself, or rather believed it ingrafted into the constitution of the empire. He presented to the emperor a petition in name of the senate, praying the restoration of the altar of victory, and the privileges of the priesthood; in which he insisted upon the toleration granted by Constantine, Jovian, and Valentinian I.; attributing the ancient prosperity of Rome to the worship of the gods, and its misfortunes to their vengeance.

St Ambrose causes it to be rejected.

St Ambrose immediately drew up a counter petition, in which he eloquently defended the cause of Christianity, and remonstrated with energy against the injustice of the Pagans: 'They complain of their losses,' says he in his address to the emperor, 'those very men who never spared our blood, who levelled our churches with the ground. They demand immunities, who, under Julian, refused us the common privilege of speaking and teaching.' His answer to Symmachus is still more spirited. The council had given their opinions in favour of the petition; but Valentinian followed the advice of St Ambrose, and it was rejected. The Christians were satisfied, and things ought to have been carried no farther; however, some calumniators were desirous of ruining Symmachus; but he exculpated himself even by the testimony of pope Damasus, as well as that of the whole city.

Could any thing have prevented the triumph of Christianity, it would have been the fatal divisions among Christians. Valentinian's mother Justina, an obstinate Arian, easily infected him with her own errors. Being desirous of procuring for that sect a church in Milan, the emperor solicited the bishop to grant them one, which St Ambrose refusing, a party of soldiers were sent with orders to seize it by force; but being excommunicated by him, the greatest part retired, upon which the eunuch Calligonus, the grand chamberlain, was despatched from court with violent menaces against the prelate. *What! dare you disobey the emperor?* said he, *I shall sever your head from your shoulders. Strike,* replied the holy man, *I am prepared to die; thou wilt do the office of an eunuch, I of a bishop.* From that time Valentinian looked upon him as an enemy; and the lords of the court entreating him to go to the church in order to make a reconciliation, he replied, *I believe that if Ambrose gave you orders, you would deliver me up to him pinioned hand and foot.* But the persecution ceased upon the interposition of Maximus, whose power was dreaded.

Valentinian favours Arianism.

This usurper had always affected a great zeal for religion. From the very beginning of his reign, his court, which he kept at Treves, was filled with bishops, whose affluence seemed to justify his revolt. According to an ecclesiastical historian of that time, they prostituted their dignity by mean flatteries. But St Martin of Tours maintained the honour of the episcopate, by never appearing before Maximus but in the character of a true minister of God, for the god of mankind, and the glory of religion.

Affected zeal of Maximus.

A pattern of patience and charity, he taught by his example how error ought to be corrected.

Condemnation of the Priscillian sect.

The sect of Priscillianists, which resembled several others, comprehended under the general name of Manicheism, began to make a noise in Spain, where it originally took its rise. Its founder, Priscillian, a Spanish bishop, was on the point of being condemned in the council of Bourdeaux; but he refused to answer, and, in consequence of an appeal to the emperor, was conducted to Maximus, together with his disciples. Idatius and Ithacus, two bishops of fiery zeal, persecuted him with all the fury of fanaticism. In vain did Martin oppose proceeding to violence, and argue, that, in such a case, afflictive penalties would be unjust. Notwithstanding his remonstrances and entreaties, Maximus condemned the Priscillianists to death. Such fruits had the sanguinary zeal of those prelates, a zeal which had been so clearly condemned by the Saviour of the world, and is equally repugnant to reason and the gospel. The church testified its just abhorrence of the deed; and the two bishops were excommunicated. The falsity of their principles was demonstrated by experience; for the followers of Priscillian reverenced him as a martyr, and his heresy continued to the end of the sixth century. Persecution has almost always produced the same effect, of which we shall meet but with too many examples.

388. Death of Maximus.

Maximus, under a mask of zeal and hypocrisy, concealed the design of new usurpations. He threatened Valentinian with a war if he continued to favour Arianism; but this was only a vain pretence to seize upon his dominions.

Ambrose, who was sent to negotiate with this zealous Catholic, only irritated him by refusing to communicate with the two bishops who had been authors of the massacre of the Priscillianists. Maximus, without losing a moment, passed the Alps; and the young emperor fled to Theodosius, who armed in his cause, took into his pay a number of barbarians inured to fatigue, but always of treacherous disposition; and in Pannonia gained two victories over the usurper, whom, considering his numerous army, it would perhaps have been impossible to vanquish, had he kept behind the Julian Alps. In his flight he was taken near Aquileia, and conducted to Theodosius, who, according to the generality of historians, after venting his resentment in reproaches, was on the point of pronouncing his pardon, when some officers hurried him out of the presence, and struck off his head. The Pagans had declared for the usurper, in hopes that he would again establish their religion; and the Christians opposed him, because he had ordered the rebuilding of a Jewish synagogue which had been burnt by the populace of Rome.

Violences of some Christians.

A synagogue having been in like manner destroyed by the Christians at Callinicum, and a temple of heretics by the monks, Theodosius ordered them to be rebuilt, and these violences to be punished. Ambrose, who had lately dissuaded him from restoring to the senate the altar of victory, likewise obtained the revocation of an order which he thought contrary to the divine law. He wrote to the prince, that 'the Christians would be prevaricators if they obeyed him, or martyrs if they chose rather to

obey God.' He added, 'the violences so often committed against the church had been left unpunished. What a shame for a Christian emperor to give room for the reproach of arming his hands only to revenge the cause of heretics and Jews!' However, this holy prelate, even by his refusal to communicate with the two sanguinary bishops, had given a proof of those charitable principles which ought to regulate the conduct both of princes and prelates.

These violences prohibited.

Some Christians, being emboldened to destroy and pillage the synagogues, committed so great excesses, that Theodosius was afterwards obliged to cause them to be severely punished, declaring that the sect of the Jews, not being proscribed by any law, ought to have the free exercise of their religion through the whole empire.

Theodosius governs for Valentinian.

Moderate in his victory, he had restored the whole empire of the West to young Valentinian; and, during a residence of three years in Italy, governed for him as a father or guardian. His principal aim at that time being the destruction of Paganism, on his arrival at Rome he exhorted the senators to embrace a religion, whose morality, equally simple and sublime, was capable of raising the most illiterate and lowest of mankind above the greatest philosophers. It was represented to him, on the other hand, that Rome had flourished for more than twelve centuries under the protection of her gods; and that it would be imprudent to abandon them for a new religion, which perhaps would not produce equally good effects; upon which he dismissed the senators, after declaring that the expense of their impious sacri-

fices should no longer be defrayed by the public treasury, the state being in want of soldiers, not of victims. The suppression of the funds destined for the sacrifices was in fact shutting up the temples.

Violences at Alexandria.

Theodosius likewise permitted the demolition of the monuments of idolatry, reserving however the statues to ornament the city, and issued severe orders through the whole empire, which were so rigidly put in execution at Alexandria, by Theophilus the bishop, as to raise seditions among the Egyptians, who beheld with horror their temples demolished, and the cheats of their priests discovered, who easily deluded the people by pretended oracles delivered through hollow statues. The same orders were executed in Syria; but in some places the resistance was so violent, that the temples were only shut up. As the popular religion was in some measure attached to sensible objects, it must, of necessity, fall with those objects of its veneration.

Private sacrifices forbidden.

By a law of the emperor, passed in 392, every man was forbidden to celebrate any sacrifice, or make any offering even within his own house; or to light tapers, burn incense, or hang up garlands in honour of the domestic gods. All who dared to offer a sacrifice, or consult the entrails of victims, were declared guilty of high treason; the houses in which incense was offered, and the lands where trees were ornamented with fillets, were confiscated. The officers and *defenders* of the cities were enjoined to lodge informations against the guilty; and the magistrates and their deputies were fined thirty pounds weight of gold, in case of failure in

their duty. Notwithstanding such rigid laws, the private sacrifices were long continued, and even some public idolatrous solemnities.

Inquisitors for the discovery of heretics.

Theodosius established *inquisitors* for the discovery of heretics. He drove the Manicheans from Rome as infamous persons; and, on their death, ordered their goods to be distributed among the people. This severity was copied by pope Siricius, who prohibited all that followed their heresy from being received into the communion; and in case they were really converted, ordered them to be shut up in monasteries, where they were subjected to severe penance, prohibiting them from receiving the eucharist till on their deathbed. This was not the method to facilitate conversions. The name of Manicheans became common to innumerable sects of fanatics, always accused of secret abominations. Manicheism had its origin in Persia; and its characteristic distinction was the doctrine of two eternal independent principles, the one good, the other bad. St Augustine was tainted with this heresy in his youth.

Inconvenience of these penal laws.

Without examining how far princes may prudently carry violence in matters of religion, I observe as an historian, that Theodosius soon felt the inconvenience of those excesses to which his laws gave birth; for every person imagining that he had a right to murder the Manicheans as proscribed persons, he was obliged to prohibit it under pain of death. Nothing is more dangerous than to arm one species of fanaticism against another; nor more difficult than to discover how far penal laws of this nature may be enforced, without hurting the cause of religion, or the rights of society.

CHAPTER III.

END OF THE REIGN OF THEODOSIUS.

ALL the glory which Theodosius had acquired from his zeal and exploits was eclipsed by the celebrated massacre of Thessalonica. That capital of Illyria was filled with a licentious people, passionately fond of public shows; and the governor, with several persons of distinction, being killed in a sedition at the time of the races, for refusing to set at liberty a charioteer whom he had imprisoned, the emperor was so provoked at the news, that though he was pacified, or appeared to be pacified by the bishops of a council of Milan, yet, at the instigation of his favourite Rufinus and his parsans, an artful and hypocritical courtier, who had imposed upon Symmachus, and even gained the friendship of St Ambrose, an universal massacre of the Thessalonians was ordered. This barbarous order was but too well executed. The inhabitants were assembled in the circus, under pretence of an exhibition of games, and slaughtered without distinction of age or sex. Seven thousand according to some, according to others fifteen thousand, the greatest part unquestionably innocent, were sacrificed to an atrocious revenge. 390. Massacre of Thessalonica

This was an occasion which ought to kindle the episcopal zeal in the cause of humanity. St Ambrose refused the emperor admittance St Ambrose makes him do penance.

into the church; and, on his urging the example of David, replied, *Since you have imitated his crime, imitate his repentance.* Theodosius obeyed; and, after eight months retirement, earnestly entreated a reconciliation, when the bishop, in order for the future to prevent the ill effects of his choler, caused him to pass a law suspending the execution of all sentences of death, and even confiscation, till thirty days after they were passed; a law which, though founded upon laudable motives, is yet productive of inconveniences. After this the bishop admitted him into the church, and prescribed his penance; during which Theodosius wore none of the ornaments of his dignity, though without losing any portion of the authority which it is not in the power of the priesthood to give, to take away, or to suspend.

Theodosius pardons the mutineers of Antioch.

Some years before 387, religion had gained over him a more glorious victory, by hindering him from gratifying his revenge, and preventing his remorse. The people of Antioch made an insurrection on account of an extraordinary impost levied for the emperor's *decennals*, under which name was celebrated the tenth year of the emperor's reign, at the expense of the people, already overburdened with taxes. The sedition was so violent, that the statues of Theodosius and his family were ignominiously thrown down. Though the magistrates had punished the delinquents with the utmost severity, he resolved, in his first transports, to bury the inhabitants of the city under its ruins; but reason in some degree regaining her ascendant, he contented himself with ordering it to be deprived of its territory,

its privileges, and reduced to the state of a common town, after all who had been concerned in the sedition were executed: But Flavian, bishop of Antioch, throwing himself at his feet, implored his clemency; and, by enforcing the motives of religion, obtained pardon for the unhappy people, who expected nothing but destruction. Can any person be blind enough, after this instance, not to see the advantages of Christianity?

The monks become dangerous in the East.

As every human institution degenerates, the monks, who were originally devoted to a deep solitude, and the practice of extraordinary virtues, were become too numerous to live in conformity to their rules. From that time, having for the most part only a false vocation, or losing sight of their duty, they frequented the cities, spent their time in disputes, in attendance on the great, intrigues, cabals, intermeddling in all affairs, civil and ecclesiastical, and often signalizing their fanatic zeal by intolerable violences. Upon a complaint from the magistrates, Theodosius forbid the monks to appear in the cities, or quit their solitudes; but two years after he revoked his edict, which was the principal cause of the continual disturbances in the East; where the monks acquired so great an ascendant over the people as even to domineer in the courts; and rose to such a height of power, that none were chosen to bishoprics except out of their number.

392. Arbogastes destroys Valentinian II.

The West, after the departure of Theodosius, saw another revolution similar to that by which Gratian had fallen a sacrifice. Valentinian had corrected his faults; he was just,

sober, assiduous, had got rid of his prejudices for Arianism, and promised an equitable government, when the ambition of a haughty subject exposed him to the greatest misfortunes. Arbogastes, by birth a Frank, of great abilities in war, respectable by his services, and even honoured with the confidence of Theodosius, at once assumed, by his own authority, the title of General. Valentinian attempting to make him resign it, *I do not hold that title of you*, said Arbogastes insolently, *and I will keep it in spite of you*. After this declaration, that general soon perceived that he could not secure his life, except by the commission of a crime. He caused the emperor to be destroyed when only twenty years of age, and put Eugenius in his place, with a design to govern under his name.

Eugenius the new emperor.

This man, who was at first a teacher of rhetoric, had risen to the post of secretary to Valentinian, and been artful enough to insinuate himself into the friendship of St Ambrose, but could only be a phantom. He sent deputies to Theodosius, among whom he took particular care that there should be a number of bishops and priests whom he had gained by his artifices. Theodosius dissembled, received the deputies kindly, gave them hopes, and made preparations for war. Eugenius, master of the West, on his arrival in Italy, consented, after a few refusals, to the reestablishment of Paganism. The temples were again opened, and crowded by the worshippers; for Rome could not conquer her ancient superstitions, and gave a visible proof to what violence her enthusiasm had been inflamed by severity.

Mean time, Theodosius seemed in perfect tranquillity; but this was only with design to secure the success of his enterprise. At last, having collected his forces, he passed the Alps, and near Aquileia gained a decisive victory. Eugenius was dragged to his feet, loaded with chains, and condemned to death. Arbogastes, obliged to wander as a fugitive, and hotly pursued, by a voluntary death escaped the hands of the executioner. The emperor treated the rest of his accomplices with clemency. The following year he died, in the fiftieth of his age, after dividing the empire between his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius; to the first of whom he assigned the East, to the latter the West.

394. Eugenius defeated. Death of Theodosius.

The reign of Theodosius appears the more glorious, as, after him, we shall only meet with scenes of ruin and misfortune; and it required uncommon abilities to suspend the revolutions. Every thing prognosticated decay. An arbitrary government without any fixed rules; a mixture of barbarians who had corrupted the ancient principles; millions of other barbarians who waited the moment of swallowing up the empire as a prey worthy of their rapacity; pompous courts filled with eunuchs and ministers of voluptuousness, where intrigue and adulation almost always reigned triumphant; luxury, carried to such a pitch in the midst of the most wretched poverty, that in some houses there might be reckoned no less than two thousand domestics adorned with bracelets and collars of gold; a general corruption of manners from the court to the cottage; religious quarrels which broke all the

Every thing prognosticated fatal revolutions.

bonds of concord among subjects divided on their articles of faith; and a beginning of ignorance, which every day more and more darkened the light of reason, as well as a taste for the really beautiful. Instead of just ideas and solid matter, plays of words and vain subtilties were substituted. When literature decays, and cultivated minds take a false direction, the science of government must necessarily be obscured. Accordingly, we have already observed many injudicious and even pernicious laws.

Profane authors.

The most estimable profane authors of those times are Ammianus Marcellinus, whom I have several times mentioned; Eutropius, author of the Epitomé; Libanius, a sophist, who is sometimes eloquent; Symmachus, whose letters are extant in ten books; Themistius, præfect of Constantinople, a philosopher esteemed by all the emperors; Eunapius and Zosimus, reproached for their partiality against the Christians; Vegetius, who wrote upon the military art; and, to close the list, Pappus and Theon, mathematicians of Alexandria. Theodosius ordered the works of Porphyry to be burnt.

Interest of money fixed at twelve per cent.

It is not to be wondered that the true principles of the finances should be unknown, because the Romans had never possessed but a very imperfect knowledge of their theory. In order to put a check upon usury, which had broken through all bounds, Theodosius fixed the interest of money on the ancient footing at twelve per cent.

Invention of window glass.

To his age is referred the invention of window glass. It is remarkable that glass had been known for several ages before men thought

of applying it to this purpose. Wheel-clocks, wind and water-mills, were inventions reserved for ages of barbarism, where the human mind was on the verge of sinking into the thickest darkness,

LAST EPOCH.

THE BARBARIANS ESTABLISHED IN THE EMPIRE. ARCADIUS EMPEROR IN THE EAST. HONORIUS IN THE WEST.

CHAPTER I.

TO THE TIME OF THE FIRST EXPEDITION OF ALARIC INTO ITALY.

395. Arcadius and Honorius, princes destitute of capacity.

We are now to give the history of two young princes, who, from their age, character, and want of education, caused by a defect of genius, were totally unable to support the weight of government in such tempestuous times as would have required the utmost efforts of men of uncommon abilities. We shall see their ministers, women, and eunuchs, manage the government for them, and the empire, falling into ruins on every side, sink at once under the miseries of a vicious administration and the attacks of numberless foreign enemies. Arcadius was but seventeen years of age, and Honorius ten. Rufinus, minister of the first, and Stilico of the other, very soon abused the authority which had been intrusted to them by Theodosius.

Rufinus, a native of Gascony, had raised himself about the end of the last reign to be præfect of the East, which he attained by working the ruin of Tatian, who held that office, and of Proculus, the son of Tatian, the præfect of Constantinople, two estimable men, of whom he was both the accuser and the judge. Strange that Theodosius should permit it! The ambition of this minister made him capable of sacrificing every thing to his own interest, which he artfully concealed under the mask of justice. Stilico, a Vandal by birth, and related to the imperial family, was no less ambitious and unprincipled than the other; but he was more circumspect, of superior abilities, affecting a life of magnificence, and carrying his purposes by the low means of a corrupt selfish heart. Under these two ministers, every thing was set up to sale; and offices were so prodigiously increased, that the prince's *agents*, whom Julian had reduced to seventeen, were now ten thousand. We may judge of other things by this specimen.

Rufinus and Stilico their ministers.

When acquiring a fortune is the main object, every idea of patriotism is lost, and ministers of such dispositions will not hesitate to sell their master when they can turn it to their own advantage. Rufinus dreaded Stilico, who alleged that he had been appointed regent of both empires by Theodosius: but he was still more jealous of Eutropius, a worthless eunuch, who had sprung from the dunghill, and acquired such influence on the mind of Arcadius, that he made him marry Eudoxia, though Rufinus intended him for his own daughter. Rufinus, whose ambition made him desirous in

Jealousy of Rufinus.

some degree to share the title of Augustus with his master, took a desperate resolution, worthy of such a detestable character.

Invites the barbarians to invade the empire.

To prevent the attempts of Stilico, and to make himself of greater consequence to Arcadius, he secretly invited the barbarians to invade the empire. The Huns immediately crossed the Tanais, came down from Mount Caucasus, laid waste Armenia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, Syria, and even made Antioch tremble. The Goths, led by Alaric, having, at the same time, passed the Danube, poured in upon the provinces lying between the Adriatic and Constantinople. Rufinus entered their camp to negociate a peace, and persuaded them to withdraw from that city; but though he desired to claim credit to himself from the transaction, his success in the negociation is a strong proof against him.

Stilico forsaken by the army.

By the indefatigable care, abilities, and military reputation of Stilico, he made the barbarians in the West desirous of peace. He immediately marched against Alaric, and with a numerous army, composed of the troops of Eugenius and Theodosius, came up with him on the plains of Thessaly. In the instant when they were going to engage, the troops that belonged to Arcadius were ordered to withdraw from the rest, and return to Constantinople; an order which had been dictated by Rufinus to check the progress of his rival.

Gainas murders Rufinus.

Stilico would not by any means detain them, but sent them back under the command of Gainas, a brave Gothic officer, who was privy to his schemes of revenge, and resolved to execute them. It was with sorrow that the

army of the East separated from that of the West; and Arcadius, with his minister, whom he was to have nominated his colleague on that very day, went out of the city to receive the homage of his troops; when, upon a signal from Gainas, they set upon Rufinus, and murdered him in the emperor's presence. He was succeeded by the eunuch Eutropius, who enriched himself with his spoils, and, like him, became the scourge of the state and the people.

After the retreat of Stilico, for when he had lost half of his army, he durst not venture an engagement, Alaric fell upon Greece, took Athens, and ruined Peloponnesus. Though that country made a part of the Eastern empire, the brave Stilico entered it to attack the Goths, without consulting Arcadius, who was sunk in effeminacy. He surrounded them in the forests of Arcadia, where they must have perished, if Stilico, who was as much a man of pleasure as of courage, had not given himself up to debauchery, instead of profiting by the situation into which he had reduced the enemy. Alaric did not let slip the opportunity to escape, and carried off all his plunder. 396. Alaric attacks Greece.

Eutropius, induced by hatred against Rufinus, had formerly united with Stilico, but from jealousy was now become his enemy, and caused him to be declared the enemy of the empire, for having attacked the barbarians in Greece, while he himself had abandoned it to be plundered. Not satisfied with this insult, he had the meanness to treat with Alaric, and to procure for him the government of eastern Illyria, in which Greece was comprehended. Repulsed by Stilic

This insolent slave made himself equally odious and ridiculous, by proscribing some of the most deserving people of the state, and oppressing the unhappy with new grievances, as well as by putting himself at the head of the army, without either ability or inclination to perform any military exploit. Hoping to govern his master by procuring him amusements, he persuaded the prince to make an annual excursion to Ancyra, a great distance from Constantinople, where the summer was spent in splendid festivals: after which, Arcadius returned to his capital in triumph.

Tyrannical law in favour of ministers.

During one of these journies, a dreadful law was promulgated, by which the interest of the emperor was sacrificed to that of his minister. It declared, that whoever conspired, or schemed a conspiracy against the life of the emperor's counsellors, or any of the chief magistrates, should not only be condemned to death as guilty of high treason, though the plot should be in no part executed, but likewise their children be doomed to infamy and perpetual poverty; and all who should intercede for them be declared infamous. All who were concerned in the offence, they and their children, were to be subject to the same punishments. Rewards were promised to whoever should discover the conspiracy from the beginning, and impunity to accomplices revealing it. Even Sejanus had conceived nothing so bad during the reign of Tiberius. The crime of high treason being extended to so many objects, lessened the horror of attempts against the person of the prince; but Arcadius had not capacity to distinguish

the difference, and thought only as Eutropius pleased to dictate.

The talents of Honorius were not superior to those of his brother, and the contempt with which they were regarded disposed the people to rebel. Count Gildo, an old, cruel, wicked debauchee, presumed to shake off the yoke of the empire in Africa; and murdered the children of his brother Mascezil, who had taken shelter in Rome, and who, from that time, became his most irreconcileable enemy. Stilico sent Mascezil against him with a small army, and proposed to follow him to conclude the war; but it was ended the first campaign, in which Gildo was defeated, and strangled himself with his own hands. Mascezil, at his return, was rewarded with the blackest treachery, as Stilico, either from distrust or jealousy, caused him to be thrown headlong from a bridge into a river, where he was drowned.

397. Rebellion in Africa against Honorius.

That minister was at least possessed of abilities and personal courage, which at first concealed his faults; but Eutropius was only a compound of baseness and malignity; yet he entirely governed the emperor, was flattered by the court, and detested by the people. Arcadius, not satisfied with raising him to the rank of patrician, named him consul. For when the empire was divided, each emperor named a consul, one for the East, the other for the West; but this scandal to the consulship excited an universal, though silent, indignation; and the eunuch, who exulted as if he had been out of fortune's reach, very soon experienced the insecurity of a detested elevation, founded upon guilt and meanness.

Eutropius raised to the consulship.

399. Tribigild and Gainas conspire against Eutropius.

His secret enemy, count Tribigild, a Gothic officer, revolted, and laid waste the country of Asia; and Gainas, a relation of the count, who held a correspondence with him, was sent to command against him. Another army was despatched, under the conduct of Leo, a wool-carder, and a favourite worthy of Eutropius. Tribigild, with three hundred men, surprised this ridiculous general in the night, and, being seconded by Gainas, gained a complete victory. Gainas then wrote to the emperor, that he could not conquer Tribigild, who had made an offer of peace, upon condition that Eutropius should be delivered up to him; and advised him not to hesitate between his own safety and the fate of his minister.

The empress insulted by the eunuch.

Arcadius, terrified by the Goths, and a slave to Eutropius, could not determine what step to take. Such was the assurance of the eunuch, that he one day threatened to turn the empress Eudoxia out of the palace. This haughty princess, by complaints, tears, and entreaties, at last prevailed with her husband to grant an order for his being arrested. He fled for shelter to a church; and the bishop St Chrysostom, who was guided by the opinions of the times, which held asylums inviolable, prohibited the guards of the prince from entering, and the emperor came to entreat the soldiers not to violate it; but Eutropius having left it in the night, with a design of making his escape, was seized and banished for life.

Ridiculous process to ruin him.

Both Gainas and Eudoxia wished to take his life, and carried on an extravagant process against the exile. They accused him of having usurped the imperial privileges, because,

at the festival, on his being nominated consul, he had made use of the Cappadocian horses, which were intended solely for the emperor; and, as if he had not been sufficiently criminal in other respects, he was condemned on this frivolous pretence, and beheaded.

400. Gainas rebels, and governs Arcadius.

Arcadius being delivered from one imperious ruler, found another equally so in his wife, who became the arbitress of the empire, though by no means worthy of governing, as she was guided entirely by women and eunuchs. Gainas, whose treachery was evident, though he put on a mask of fidelity, very soon rebelled openly, and marched towards Constantinople. The emperor wrote to him immediately to inform him that he was ready to satisfy his demands as soon as he should make them known. The general of the Goths at first required, that three of the chief nobles of the court should be put into his power. This was agreed to, and they voluntarily went to surrender. He next required that the emperor should meet him at Chalcedon, to conclude a treaty of peace. Arcadius went to Chalcedon, continued the rebel his general, bestowed upon him the ensigns of the consulship, and Gainas, with still the same inclinations for rebellion, returned to Constantinople. The emperor was nothing in his presence!

Death of Gainas.

As the barbarians were easily led by motives of interest to change their religion, the Goths of the empire had embraced Christianity; but being mostly Arians, they were excluded from the churches. Gainas, therefore, demanded a church for himself and his people. Arcadius represented to St Chrysostom the danger of re-

fusing; but the intrepid bishop would not consent, and therefore the Goths again took up arms. Gainas not being able to take the city, in which a number of his soldiers had been massacred, and more than seven thousand burnt in a church, attempted to pass the Hellespont in wretched boats, and in the presence of the enemy's fleet; but he did not succeed, and sustained considerable loss also in this attempt. He then retired towards the Danube, in hopes of finding an asylum beyond that river; but the Huns not choosing such a neighbour, attacked and defeated his army, Gainas himself having fallen in the engagement.

CHAPTER II.

ALARIC IN ITALY. GAUL LAID WASTE. SPAIN CONQUERED BY THE VANDALS.

401. Alaric threatens Rome.

ALARIC, a general of abilities superior to Gainas, did not long continue at peace in Illyria, where he commanded, but, being proclaimed king of the Visigoths by his army, who were dissatisfied with the Romans, prepared to penetrate into Italy, and to take possession of Rome. After one fruitless attempt, he passed the Alps, while the legions were employed in Rhætia against the Germans. The territory of Venice, and even Liguria, were already infested, and Rome trembled at their approach. Stilico repaired the walls, and encouraged Honorius, whose object was to leave Milan, and retire into

Gaul. He then assembled troops, deceived Alaric, by promising him a settlement beyond the Alps in the emperor's name, and then suddenly attacked him at Polentia at present a town in Piedmont. The king of the Visigoths defended himself with such courage and ability, that the victory was undecided. Upon the faith of a new treaty, he began his march to return by the Julian Alps, when Stilico, by a second act of treachery, though he could not conquer him, exposed him to the danger of perishing. Being abandoned by his soldiers, who deserted from want of provisions, and allurements offered to them by the enemy, he returned to Illyria, abhorring Roman treachery, and breathing vengeance.

Honorius removes to Ravenna.

The timid Honorius at that time transferred his court to Ravenna, a place of great strength, from whence he could easily pass to Epirus, so that it became the capital of the West. Maximian had formerly fixed his court at Milan, that he might be near enough to protect the provinces; but the sole object of Honorius was self-preservation. It was to no purpose that Milan and Rome sent deputies to prevail with the emperor that they might obtain the preference of Ravenna.

406. Ambitious designs of Stilico.

The barbarians were now acquainted with the route to Italy; but the empire had no force to oppose them but mercenary troops, among whom were a number of barbarians well inclined to betray their trust. Military discipline was entirely at an end in the army, and every sentiment of honour and love of country effaced from the minds of the people; so that nothing could be reasonably expected but a suc-

cession of misfortunes. The ambitious policy of Stilico contributed to the public disasters; he hoped, at least, that his son Encherius, cousin of the two emperors, would succeed to the diadem, and that expectation was strengthened by the wife of Honorius having no children. That he might accomplish his purpose, he attempted to weaken and distress both empires. These are the conjectures of historians, which have been sometimes received as certain truths. According to them, Alaric seemed to be a necessary instrument, and was gained over by his offers to unite with him in conquering Eastern Illyria, as part of the territory of Honorius; but that design was interrupted in the execution by an unexpected invasion of the Goths.

Radagaisus invades Italy.

Radagaisus, their chief, with two hundred thousand men, poured in upon Italy, where the minds of the Roman people were so depraved by superstition, and attached to idolatry, that they congratulated themselves upon this invasion. Being convinced that their gods were about to revenge their own cause, they insulted Christianity, which, they said, was *the ruin of nations, and the scourge of the world*; but, happily, their hopes were frustrated. Radagaisus laid siege to Florence, but without precaution, or any knowledge of the art of war; when Stilico, having been reinforced by the Huns, and by a Gothic leader, attacked, defeated, made him prisoner, and caused him to be beheaded. Of the whole multitude of enemies, only twelve thousand escaped, many more having fallen by hunger and disease than by the sword.

406. Gaul overrun by barbarians.

Italy was scarcely freed from those enemies, when a dreadful irruption of barbarians, Alans,

Vandals, and Suevi, overwhelmed the Roman power in Gaul. If it is true, as has been mentioned, though very improbable, that Stilico had invited them to make the attempt, he did not suspect that they could have been so speedy, or have executed it before the conquest of Illyria, which he had projected with Alaric. To give up the empire to the rage of barbarous enemies, was a very extraordinary method of acquiring the sovereign power.

Vandals. The Vandals, who were of Gothic origin, by mixing with the ancient Vinili, were in some degree become Germans, and had communicated their name to several German nations; for it was given to the Burgundians, Rugii, Heruli, Lombards, Angli, or English, Thuringians, and others. Those we speak of inhabited the country of Pannonia, a province of the empire where Stilico was born.

Suevi. The Suevi, who were at first a wandering nation, had formerly occupied all the country between the Elbe, the Vistula, the Danube, and the Baltic. Being afterwards divided into a number of hordes, which overspread the country of Germany, such of them as preserved the name of Suevi in the time of Augustus, possessed the country east of the Rhine, but were compelled to retire into Bohemia, a part of which was taken from them by the Vandals.

Alans. We formerly mentioned the Alans. From the time they had been driven from the banks of the Tanais by the Huns, they wandered along the Danube. They had been of great use in the armies of Theodosius and Stilico; but, by serving for hire, they had learned to conquer

and strip those people whose battles they fought, without attachment to their cause.

Alemains and Burgundians.

These three nations having been joined on their march by a number of Huns, Sarmatians, and others, crossed the Rhine near Mentz, and, meeting with no Roman garrison, spread like a torrent as far as the Pyrenees. The Alemains and the Burgundians followed their steps; the last settling in Helvetia, and afterwards in the country of Sequani and Edui; the others on the Banks of the Rhine, from Basle to Mentz. The whole country of Gaul was strewed with human carcases.

Constantine emperor in Britain.

The army in Britain, dismayed at the thoughts of such a deluge of enemies, and despairing of assistance, declared a private soldier, of the name of Constantine, emperor, who was afterwards acknowledged in Gaul, and whose son, Constans, made himself master of Spain, whom Honorius was compelled to receive as his colleague.

408. Alaric returns again into Italy.

At the same time, Alaric, tired of waiting three years for Stilico to join him in making the conquest of Illyria, advanced with his army towards Italy, and demanded a sum of money to indemnify him for the expense of his expedition, and the preparations he had made. The emperor was then at Rome, and it was debated in the senate what steps were proper to be taken. The majority were for war; but Stilico caused it to be determined to give four thousand pounds weight of gold; upon which one of the senators exclaimed, as Cicero did on another occasion, *This is not a treaty of peace, but a contract of slavery!* The minister maintained, that Alaric had demanded nothing but what he

was well entitled to, as he had remained three years in Epirus for the service of Honorius. A person, who had been indebted to Stilico for his fortune, took the present opportunity of ruining him.

Olympius conspires the ruin of Stilico.

This courtier, whose name was Olympius, represented by the Pagans as a hypocrite, and by the Christians as a faithful deserving subject, persuaded the emperor that his minister intended to usurp the throne; that he was the author of the invasion by the barbarians; that his son, who was bred a Pagan, was the object to whom the Pagans looked up as their chief hope; and that medals were already struck, bearing the impression of the father and the son. The accuser, distrusting the want of steadiness in the prince, found means to compel him to act openly. He gained over the troops that were assembled at Pavia; and, having inspired them with his own sentiments, caused all the friends of the minister to be massacred in a mutiny. The soldiers being let loose, pillaged the town, without showing the least respect for Honorius, who endeavoured in vain to appease them.

Stilico seized and executed.

Stilico was at that time in Ravenna; and knowing that Olympius, with the emperor's authority, had sent an order for his being arrested, took refuge in a church. The officers went thither to find him, and having sworn that they would make no attempt upon his life, he delivered himself up into their hands; but they immediately produced a second order, by which he was sentenced to be put to death as a traitor to his prince and his country, and his head was cut off. His son likewise suffered the same

fate. Those of his chief friends, who were still living, a secretary of state and a captain of the guards, were put to the torture; but the torments they suffered could not draw from them any confession.

Detestable conduct of Olympius.

Olympius having enriched himself with the spoils of Stilico, in his turn governed in the most absolute manner, disposing of every thing in favour of his own creatures. Even supposing Stilico guilty, the behaviour of Olympius proves him to have been a worthless character. The Roman soldiers, to complete their inhumanity, massacred the wives and children of the barbarians who had been attached to the former minister; so that they, to the number of thirty thousand, transported with rage and indignation, fled to the camp of Alaric, to serve under his standard.

Olympius zealous in support of the church.

Since Olympius has been praised by Symmachus, we need not be surprised at the encomiums which have been lavished upon him by St Augustine, and other ecclesiastical writers, as they found a sufficient motive in the laws which he made in favour of the church and the clergy; for the laws of Honorius were those of his ministers. Appeals to the bishops were authorized in all civil causes; their decision was final; and the secular power obliged to execute the sentence. By this law, if it had continued in force, the lay courts must have been annihilated. St Augustine having complained to Olympius of the violences committed by the Pagans and Heretics, they were excluded from the privilege of holding offices; the Catholics were put in possession of all the churches; all Pagan solemnities were abolished; the bishops

charged to attend to the execution of these orders, and the public officers to second the bishops, under the penalty of paying a fine of twenty pounds weight of gold. Whoever disturbed the Catholics in the exercise of their religion were condemned to be put to death; and they who publicly opposed their tenets, to be banished. This was the way to secure the attachment of the orthodox, but to enrage the others, whom they ought by no means to have irritated.

409. The law which excluded Pagans revoked.

In the year 409, the emperor was obliged to revoke the law which excluded the Pagans from holding offices. Generides, a barbarian by birth, a Pagan, a worthy man, and brave officer, chose rather to quit the service than to betray his religion. *The law was not intended to affect you*, said Honorius to him, as if the laws were not made for the whole people; but Generides steadily refused the rank of general till that law was revoked.

Alaric returned to Italy.

After the death of Stilico, Alaric plainly foresaw that the promised sum would not be paid to him; but, that he might show himself as just as the Romans were perfidious, he sent to make the demand. His message being treated with contempt by the emperor, and Olympius, without making any preparations, or assembling a sufficient number of troops, having appointed generals as incapable as himself, the king of the Goths, who had been waiting in Noricum, in the circles of Bavaria and Austria, crossed Italy with all the rapidity of a traveller who meets with no obstruction, and arrived at the gates of Rome. Such was the barbarity of the Romans, that the senate then caused Se-

rena, the widow of Stilico, and niece of Theodosius, to be strangled; a princess whom Honorius had long honoured as his mother, and who had been unjustly suspected of carrying on a correspondence with Alaric.

He reduces Rome, and dictates peace.

This brave and able conqueror making himself master of the Tiber, cut off their provisions, and very soon reduced the city to extremity. Ravenna seemed to be at an infinite distance; they expected assistance in vain; and they at last sent deputies to treat with the enemy, offering to submit, on condition that disgraceful terms should not be imposed; but, otherwise, declaring that the Roman people desired only to be led to action. This absurd gasconade was laughed at by Alaric, who, in his turn, demanded all the wealth of Rome. *What will you leave then to the inhabitants?* said the deputies. *Their lives*, replied the other fiercely. They agreed that Rome should pay him five thousand pounds weight of gold, thirty thousand of silver, and the children of the principal citizens should be delivered as hostages. These terms being ratified by the emperor, he retired.

Anecdote of this great man.

The king of the Goths was not a barbarian, but in name. Some of his soldiers having seized a convoy of provisions, he punished them severely, and made them restore it; an act of justice perhaps more humiliating to the Romans than his victory. We shall meet with an instance of their treacherous behaviour to him, for which they suffered the punishment they deserved.

409. Britain abandoned.

The name of Constantine, which appeared fortunate at the time the troops in Britain chose the soldier we mentioned to be emperor, was

but a slender obstruction to the progress of these people, who subsisted by plunder, and had overspread all the country of Gaul. It was found necessary to relinquish Britain, which had always been laid waste by the Picts and the Scots; and notice was sent to the Britons to defend themselves, who, by this means, recovered their liberty while they lost a necessary protection. The Armoricans, who possessed the coasts lying between the Seine and the Loire, likewise eager to be free, drove out the Romans, and instituted a republican government for themselves; but these losses did not equal that of Spain, which very soon followed.

Spain conquered by the barbarians.

Constans, the son of Constantine the usurper, was at that time at war with Gerontius, his best general; and thus the rage of civil discord was added to so many dreadful calamities. The Alans, the Suevi, and the Vandals, taking advantage of the dissensions among the Romans, passed the Pyrenees, and desolated all Spain with fire and sword. The human imagination cannot conceive the horrors which that country experienced for a whole year. Plague and famine were added to these dreadful massacres; men devoured one another. A mother roasted and devoured her four children, of which no other instance is to be found in history. The barbarians at last divided their conquest among them, and settled in the country.

These conquerors civilised.

As soon as they got quiet possession, they began to be humanized. They cultivated the lands, behaved with mildness to the inhabitants, providing such as chose to leave the country with necessary assistance, and, upon all oc-

casions, preserving their promises inviolable. Their reputation for justice brought back great numbers of the people who had fled from this fertile country, where they had been formerly oppressed by despotism. Spain became almost happy under these new masters, who were looked upon at first as savage monsters. They were all confounded under the name of Vandals, which name was sometimes given even to the Saracens. As Gerontius had promoted their enterprise, they left the Romans the country lying on this side the Ebro, which is called New Castile, from Toledo, and the kingdoms of Arragon and Valencia, as far as the ancient Saguntum.

CHAPTER III.

ALARIC AT ROME. END OF THE REIGN OF ARCADIUS.

409. The treaty with Alaric violated.

HONORIUS was such a weak prince, that neither the loss of extensive provinces, nor seeing himself threatened with total destruction, could render him either more discerning or more prudent. Alaric was waiting in his camp in Tuscany for the performance of the articles of the treaty which was concluded with him for the preservation of Rome; but the court presumed to violate their promise. Olympius only thought of preserving his own power, by ruining all whom he either hated or suspected; and this unworthy minister was ruined in his turn

by an intrigue of some eunuchs. His successor Jovius was a mere busy body, a traitor void of understanding, who began a treaty with Alaric, in which he miscarried from ignorance; and, through fear of being suspected of treachery, swore by the life of the emperor, and made all his officers, and even the emperor himself, take an oath that they would never agree to an accommodation with the Goths. Some equitable proposals, which were made by Alaric, were rejected, from a ridiculous pretence, that if they had sworn by the name of God, they might hope that he would forgive the perjury; but having sworn by the life of the prince, to violate that oath would be to expose the life of the prince. When affairs of state are decided by such motives, the state deserves destruction, since it is governed by folly.

Attalus emperor, afterwards deposed.

Alaric very soon presented himself at the gates of Rome, and compelled the Romans to forsake Honorius, giving them Attalus, the præfect of the city, for emperor, a man from whom he had nothing to dread. Attalus, who was equally weak and presumptuous, being accompanied by the king of the Goths, approached to Ravenna, when Honorius, in terror, made him an offer of sharing the empire with him, to which he replied, he would have the whole; but afterwards committed such gross blunders, that Alaric lost patience, and, deposing him, renewed the negotiation with Honorius. The imprudence of Attalus prevented the conquest of Africa. No corn having been received at Rome from that province, the famine was so dreadful that the people, in a transport of rage, exclaimed, during the games in the circus,

Let human flesh be exposed to sale, and the price settled!

410. He takes Rome. This unfortunate city thought herself out of danger, when a new piece of treachery brought upon her still greater miseries. Honorius, who was less scrupulous about his oath, at last began to treat with Alaric; but Sarus, a Gothic captain, who was an enemy of the king, and attached to the emperor, broke off the negociation by attacking the Goths, while the conferences were open, and killed a great number. Alaric, in a rage, laid siege to Rome for the third time, and, having carried it, gave it up to be pillaged; but his generous mind, which always was averse from coming to this extremity, made him give orders to his soldiers to be sparing of blood, to respect the honour of the women, and not to burn the edifices dedicated to religion. Two very large churches were marked out as inviolable asylums.

Misfortunes of the city. In such circumstances, it was impossible to restrain the rage of the soldiery. Streets and houses were deluged with blood, and the flames caused dreadful devastation; but the churches and public buildings were spared, and the lives of many Romans saved by Alaric. No person that was known to be a senator lost his life. We are assured by cotemporaries, that the city suffered infinitely more at the irruption of the Gauls, during the ancient civil wars, and even by the fire in the time of Nero. Though such a heavy loss could not be repaired, yet the city was very soon repeopled. Dismal monuments of destruction and massacre were visible through its whole extent, which comprehended a space of twenty-one miles.

To refute the Pagans, whose unjust prejudices ascribed these misfortunes to Christianity, St Augustine wrote his book *Of the City of God*, and his disciple Orosius composed an Universal History. Both of them represented these human calamities as punishments for the wickedness of the people; and Salvianus, who was more eloquent, pursued the same path. Though their idea may be pious, and the impression it might make upon the minds of men useful, yet, since we frequently see vice prosperous in this world, and the virtuous become the victims of the wicked, and since divine justice is exercised in another life, it is of the greatest consequence to us to examine the moral and physical causes of natural events. The working of the first cause is to us invisible, but that of second causes is within reach of our inquiries; and it is by attending to them that we acquire skill and prudence. Rome will ever remain an important object for our consideration, in which we may see the necessary influence of vice, of the passions, errors, a bad form of government, and excessive grandeur; in a word, whatever can contribute to the unhappiness of individuals, or the ruin of empires.

These calamities ascribed to Divine vengeance.

Great numbers of the citizens flying from Rome retired to Carthage, where their first care was to run to the theatre to take a side in the contests of the spectators, and to signalize themselves by their levity and turbulence. As this was the disposition of the Romans at that time, we cannot be surprised at their weakness or their misfortunes.

Roman behaviour at Carthage.

Undoubtedly, if Alaric had pleased, he might have taken Ravenna, and reigned in Italy; but

Death of Alaric.

it is supposed that he preferred Africa, where a single victory might have secured him the possession; and he prepared first to pillage Sicily. A part of his army was embarked, when his fleet was destroyed in his sight by a dreadful storm. Afflicted at this disaster, he was deliberating about the means of repairing it, when he died at Cosentia, leaving for his successor Ataulfus, his brother-in-law, and the companion of his actions.

Manner of burial among the Goths.

The Goths had a very extraordinary custom, probably founded in superstition; they concealed the burying place of their great men, which is ornamented by other people with magnificent monuments. They turned the course of a small river, and dug a grave in its bed, where they deposited the body of Alaric, with some rich spoils; after which they returned the water to its proper channel, and murdered the prisoners by whom the work was executed.

Several assumed the purple in Gaul.

A multitude of events succeeded *rapidly* about this period, attended with no circumstances worthy our notice. Gerontius, who was settled in Spain, came to attack Constantine in Gaul, and surprising Constans, the son of that usurper, at Vienne, cut off his head, and besieged the father in Arles; but Constantius, the only general that Honorius had in his service who was not chosen from among the barbarians, put to flight Gerontius, who laid violent hands upon himself. Maximus, whom he had decorated with the purple, was put to death soon after. Constantius stormed the city of Arles, and Constantine took refuge in a church, where he was ordained a priest. His life was

promised to him on oath, in the name of Honorius; but that emperor disavowing it, both he and his son were put to death. Jovinus, a Gaul of illustrious birth, who next assumed the purple, was likewise beheaded. Heraclian tried his fortune the same way; but being defeated, underwent the same punishment. These tragical examples neither served to put a stop to the views of ambition, nor to secure the throne.

Ataulfus marries Placidia.

The generous Ataulfus, the worthy successor of Alaric, a friend to peace, wanted nothing but a settlement in the empire, and the hand of Placidia, the sister of Honorius, who had been the captive of Alaric. Having entered into treaty with that prince, and being deceived, according to custom, he laid waste the country of Gaul. He took Narbonne and Toulouse; and, by his agreeable manners, having obtained the consent of the princess, he married her. Upon condition that he was to have no ships, nor carry on commerce with foreigners, an establishment was granted him in Spain, on this side the Ebro. He was satisfied with a lot which he could improve by arms; and was scarce confirmed, when he was assassinated by one of his equerries, and died, recommending to his brother to restore Placidia to the emperor, and to preserve peace between the two nations. About the same time, Honorius yielded to the Burgundians a part of their conquests in Gaul.

Judgment against the Donatists.

During these revolutions, the Donatists, who were always obstinate and impetuous, filled Africa with dissensions. The emperor published new edicts against them, and declared whoever attempted to change the faith guilty

of a capital offence. The Catholic bishops having proposed a conference, as a means of conciliation, he gave orders for the Count Marcellinus to preside at the meeting; and, after hearing both parties, to pronounce a definitive sentence. Marcellinus pronounced in favour of the Catholics, declaring the Donatists authors of schism, and subjected them to the punishments prescribed by the laws; but their outrages were only by this means increased.

Clerks exempted from secular tribunals.

On occasion of an insurrection of the people of Arles against the bishop, Honorius declared, by a celebrated law, that no clerk could be accused except before a bishop, and that the accusers should be held infamous if they did not prove their charge. We shall see great abuses arise from these immunities. The evil might have been prevented by proper restrictions; but nothing was foreseen, and civil order and sovereign authority together fell to ruin.

St Chrysostom banished.

The affairs in the East, which we have left for some time unnoticed, on purpose to avoid confusion, present nothing to this period but melancholy objects either for church or state. St John Chrysostom, bishop of Constantinople, the most eloquent, and one of the most virtuous men of the age, having been twice banished, occasioned a sedition in that city. This holy prelate attempted to reform the morals of the clergy, the monks, the people, and the court; by which means he raised a number of enemies of all the different orders. The empress Eudoxia, an imperious and revengeful woman, ruled the weak Arcadius. Chrysostom was accused of having pointed her out in one of his sermons by the name of Jezebel; and Eudoxia

causing him to be condemned by an assembly of bishops who were at her devotion, he was banished by the emperor; but the outcries of the people occasioned his being recalled, when his zeal became more animated than ever. He complained of the games and dances, with which the dedication of a statue of Eudoxia had been celebrated, which had indecently interrupted divine worship, and the empress was much offended with him; but forgetting her imperial dignity, and thinking only of the abuse which had been committed, he began one of his sermons with the following words, *Behold Herodias again in a rage! behold she dances! again she requires the head of John.* A second banishment very soon followed. Chrysostom continued three years, and died in 407. Eudoxia died in 404, and Arcadius in 408, leaving the empire to his son, Theodosius the younger, who was only seven years of age.

He repealed an ancient law, by which the judges were obliged to pronounce their sentences in Latin, a language unknown in the greatest part of the East, and gave leave to pronounce them either in Greek or Latin. The Greek ought to have been preferred, as it was the language of the country.

THEODOSIUS II. EMPEROR IN THE EAST. HONORIUS IN THE WEST.

402. Anthemius a wise minister.

UNDER an infant emperor every thing was to be dreaded; foreign enemies, civil dissensions, and the intrigues of the court. But Anthemius, captain of the guards, who assumed the reins of government under Theodosius the younger, possessed all the qualities of an able and spirited minister. If he found it impossible to put an end to the intrigues of the eunuchs by whom the prince was beset, he at least checked a number of abuses, and kept the enemies of the empire within bounds. Isdegerd, king of Persia, declared himself the protector of Theodosius. Uldes, king of the Huns, made incursions into Thrace, and insisted upon what tribute he pleased, as the price of withdrawing his troops; but he was attacked, and disappeared. In consequence of the measures adopted by the wise Synesius, tranquillity was at last restored in Cyrenaica, a country of Lybia, which had been a prey to the ravages of the barbarous Austurians, and still more to the oppressions of rapacious governors, placed and protected by the eunuchs.

Law confiscating the goods of heretics.

Anthemius rebuilt the walls of Constantinople, whose compass was now too small for the inhabitants. While he enforced the laws against heretics, he endeavoured to prevent them from serving as a cloak to abuse. In case of failure of

natural heirs, the possessions of heretics escheat to the treasury; and he prohibited the Catholics from turning the confiscation to their own advantage, even in virtue of a donation from the emperor, which was to be held as surreptitiously obtained. The reason of this law was, that the spoils of the heretics excited the avidity of their adversaries, and doubtless multiplied accusations.

414. Pulcheria governs.

From the time when Pulcheria appears at the head of affairs, we hear no more of Anthemius. This princess, who was declared Augusta when only fifteen years of age, took upon herself the weight of the government, and managed it with as much prudence as if she had had long experience. She turned her principal attention to the education of her brother; and, after removing his preceptor, Antiochus, an eunuch of intriguing spirit and rapacious temper, endeavoured to inspire the young prince with piety, virtue, the love of business, and every sentiment worthy of a sovereign.

Theodosius profits little by his education.

But the understanding of Theodosius was weak, his soul grovelling, and incapable of any thing great. He was only a spiritless devotee, and a bad theologist. His palace was converted into a kind of monastery, where he and his sister chaunted the office from the dawn of day. Perhaps Pulcheria herself was not sufficiently aware, that, on the throne, piety ought to be less subjected to observances, less laborious than in the cloister; that it ought to be exemplary to the subjects, without taking up the time destined for the business of the public, and degrading majesty by a mistaken devotion.

He trembles at excommunication.

The following anecdote proves evidently that he had more superstition than religion. A monk, provoked at the emperor's refusing him some favour, cried out, as he quitted the presence, *I excommunicate you!* and Theodosius, trembling at this ridiculous anathema, protested, that he would not taste food till he had received absolution. He conjured a bishop to obtain that favour for him, and, notwithstanding the prelate's remonstrances, abstained from all food till the insolent monk had taken off his sentence.

Gives himself up to the eunuchs.

Pulcheria could never conquer the ascendant which the lacqueys of the court had over her brother. Laws and ordinances were made by eunuchs, which he signed without reading, and maintained to his sister that he read every one of them. In order to open his eyes, she presented to him a paper, by which he gave up his wife to slavery, and he signed it according to custom, without examination. In vain did Pulcheria give him this warning; it mortified, but did not correct him. The reader may foretel, that his reign, which lasted forty-two years, will only be a long series of blunders, without a single glorious action.

415. Laws in favour of Christianity

Severe laws were established in favour of Christianity, by which the Pagans were prohibited from bearing any offices; those who were discovered offering sacrifices were condemned to banishment, with confiscation of goods; and the temples and other places consecrated to idolatry converted into churches, under pain of death to all who opposed it.

Sedition at Alexandria.

The idolators in the East being reduced to a small body, were more easily overpowered than formerly. But the Christians of Alexandria sig-

nalized themselves by one of the most dreadful seditions that were ever raised in that turbulent city; and the Jews, who were very numerous there, formed a party against them. The quarrel, which was originally raised on account of a dancer, the fondness for public diversions often producing dissensions equally bloody and frivolous, was followed by a conspiracy of the Jews.

St Cyril persecutes the Jews.

St Cyril, bishop of Alexandria, a prelate, whose sanctity was joined with an impetuous temper, and who, with right intentions, possibly carried his zeal beyond proper bounds, attacked the synagogues, and drove out the Jews. Their goods were pillaged, and several persons perished in the tumult.* The monks, who resided in the neighbouring mountains of Nitria, were a band of seditious men, who, under the bishop Theophilus, predecessor and uncle of St Cyril, had committed all kinds of violence, and a body of five hundred of them now came again to signalize themselves. Orestes, the governor, having quarrelled with Cyril, was insulted by them in the streets, and one of them even wounded him by a blow with a stone. Ammonius, the monk, who had committed that outrage, was seized, dragged before the governor, and put to the torture, under which he expired. Upon which Cyril pronounced his eulogium, and gave him the title of martyr; and the people who, but a moment before, had defended Orestes against the monks, then joined the bishop, either from fickleness, or a principle of blind fanaticism.

* See the History of the Lower Empire.

Hypatia torn in pieces by the Christians.

An execrable and atrocious crime gave additional horrors to the sedition. Hypatia, daughter of the celebrated geometrician Theon, exceeded her father in learning, and gave public lectures in philosophy with the greatest applause; nor was she less admirable for the purity of her virtue, joined to an uncommon beauty, and every accomplishment that could adorn human nature. But this excellent woman, because she was a Pagan, trusted by the magistrates, and suspected to be active against St Cyril, became an object of detestation to that fanatical people. A set of desperadoes, headed by a priest, seized her in the open street, hurried her into a church, where they stripped her naked, tore her body with whips, cut her in pieces, and publicly burnt her mangled limbs in the market place.

This crime remains unpunished.

Theodosius, enraged at this act of barbarity, resolved to punish it; but the criminals purchased the protection of the eunuchs, and escaped with impunity. An ineffectual law was published to restrain the licentiousness of a set of priests in Alexandria, who were styled *Parabolani*, that is, *men who braved dangers*; and this seems to have been the only measure that was taken to remedy the disorder.

421. Theodosius marries Athenais.

The emperor's marriage with the celebrated Athenais, forms a striking contrast with the murder of Hypatia. Leontius, a sophist of Athens, her father, had disinherited her in favour of his other children, because, said he, whimsically, in his will, *she might find sufficient resources in her merit, which was superior to her sex*. Having repaired to Constantinople, in order to procure herself justice, she so charmed

Pulcheria and Theodosius, by her beauty, her wit, and her virtue, that the emperor married her. Being a Pagan, as her father had been, she was baptized, and her name changed to that of Eudoxia. She cultivated letters during her whole life, and Photius highly extols her poems on religious subjects.

Soon after this marriage, a violent persecution, which the Christians suffered in Persia, kindled a war between the two nations, who had been so long enemies. Abdas, a bishop of that country, had burned a Persian temple, and refused to rebuild it, notwithstanding the king's order, who granted to the Christians the free exercise of their religion. This extravagant action caused the toleration to be revoked, the churches were demolished, and the hands of the executioners armed against the faithful. Great numbers of them having fled for protection into the Roman territories, were reclaimed by the son of Isdegerd, Varanes V., who, upon the refusal of Theodosius, detained some subjects of the empire. The war then commenced, and, after some campaigns, in which the Romans had the advantage, the Persians sued for peace. A treaty was accordingly concluded for a hundred years; but the toleration, of the revocation of which Abdas had been the cause, was but imperfectly restored. *

Persecution and war in Persia.

More interesting affairs call our attention to the West, where the barbarians successfully continued their enterprises. Ataulfus was succeeded by Sigeric, his declared enemy, who

418. The Visigoths established in Gaul.

* See Theodoret.

massacred his children, and reigned only seven days, his subjects hastening to extinguish tyranny in its birth, by the murder of the tyrant. Wallia, whom the Visigoths elected in his stead, a man equally politic and brave, made a treaty with the general Constantius, by which he engaged to restore Placidia, and to serve the emperor in his wars, on condition of receiving six hundred thousand measures of wheat. In fact, he defeated the Vandals and Alans; and, either as a recompense for his services, or from a dread that he would keep his conquests, the Romans granted him, in exchange for his possessions on the other side of the Pyrenees, an establishment much more worthy of his ambition, ceding to him Aquitania Secunda, and Novem Populania, at present Poitou Saintonge, Perigord, Bordelois, Agenois, Angoumois, and Gascony, besides the city of Toulouse, which he made his capital. That country was named Gothia, and the Goths held it fourscore and eight years, till the invasion of Clovis.

420. Establishment of the Franks.

According to the generality of authors, the Franks settled two years afterwards under their king, Pharamond, in the country situated between Maestricht and the confluence of the Maes and Waal. But the existence of this prince is problematical. Better critics ascribe the foundation of the French monarchy to Clodion, in 438. But Clovis ought to be looked upon as its real founder, * for prior to his times we meet with scarce any thing but fables. Let us content ourselves with observing here, that

* I begin Modern history with the establishment of the French monarchy by Clovis; but we must here continue the Roman history, in order to avoid confusion.

from the time of Gordian, the Franks had made frequent incursions into Gaul; and that, according to the most probable opinion, they were a collection of several confederate German tribes, between the Rhine, the Mein, and the Weser, who united, in defence of their liberty against the Romans, the name of *Frank*, in their language signifying *free*. The most distinguished among them were the Sicambri.

421. Constantius promoted to the empire, and dies.

Constantius, after having done the empire good service against the barbarians, at last married Placidia, sister of the emperor, and widow of Ataulfus. He had managed all the affairs of the empire for ten years; and, as well as his wife, being ambitious of the imperial dignity, it was conferred upon them by Honorius, who had no children. But Constantius died the same year; and Placidia, upon account of a quarrel with her brother, being ordered to quit Ravenna, retired to Theodosius the younger.

423. Death of Honorius.

The death of Honorius, which happened in 423, would have been a blessing to the empire, had it been possible to repair the misfortunes of his reign. That prince, whose weakness rather than inclination made him almost a tyrant, committed every act of injustice that he was put upon.

Legislation of Arcadius and Honorius.

If we were to judge by the numerous laws of Arcadius and Honorius which were commonly published in the name of both emperors, it would be believed at first that the government was watchful for the happiness of the subjects. We find in them excellent sentiments and good principles; but, in reality,

these were mere words. The public miseries were increased by some laws in their nature faulty; and the best were not put in execution. It was incessantly necessary to make alterations, additions, or repeals; and legislation, which ought to be simple and unequivocal, was converted into a chaos of darkness and uncertainty.

Shows of the gladiators abolished.

The inhuman shows of gladiators were still kept up, notwithstanding a law of Constantine prohibiting them; but they were abolished by Honorius in 403, because an anchoret, named Telemachus, who had come from the East on purpose to attempt a reformation of that abuse, having thrown himself into the middle of the combatants in the arena, in order to part them, was stoned to death by the spectators.

Riches concentrated in Rome.

Historians assure us, that, before Rome was taken by Alaric, there were several families whose yearly income amounted to more than 200,000*l.*; and the families of the second rank commonly had, at least, about 50,000*l.* a year. From hence, it is easy to conclude that this city absorbed all the wealth of the empire; that the extreme opulence of some produced extreme poverty in the others; and that the lower orders of the people were oppressed in order to fill the coffers of those insatiable men who never have enough to supply their pleasures; in a word, that riches and indigence equally contributed to extinguish their courage, to eradicate their virtue, and destroy every principle of love for their country. The provinces groaned under an insupportable and tyrannical yoke; the laws always spoke a desire

of relieving them; but the government constantly acted in contradiction to the laws. We must not therefore be astonished that the barbarians destroyed the empire.

THEODOSIUS II. EMPEROR IN THE EAST. VALENTINIAN III. IN THE WEST.

CHAPTER I.

VALENTINIAN ASSOCIATED IN THE EMPIRE. LAWS OF THEODOSIUS II. GENSERIC FORMIDABLE IN AFRICA.

425. Theodosius associates Valentinian III. in the empire.

THEODOSIUS, not having acknowledged the title of Constantius and Placidia, at first entertained thoughts of reuniting the two empires in his own person. But John, secretary of state to Honorius, having assumed the purple, granted liberty to the slaves, in order to form them into an army, and sent the celebrated general, Aetius, to solicit assistance from the Huns. The emperor found himself under a necessity of sharing it; and therefore granted to Valentian, the son of Constantius, a boy of five years of age, the title of *Most noble*, which had been substituted instead of that of *Cæsar*; and bestowed on his mother, Placidia, that of *Augusta*; after which he sent them into the West at the head of an army. John was taken and beheaded, after a reign of two years; and Valentinian III. was proclaimed emperor, who, on his marriage with the daughter of Theodosius, ceded the western Illyria to his father-in-law.

One of the first laws of Theodosius contains a maxim highly worthy of a monarch. *The sovereign majesty*, says he, *does itself honour by acknowledging its subjection to the laws. The power of the laws is the foundation of ours; and there is more honour in obeying them, than in commanding alone without them.* 'This,' says M. le Beau, 'is the sublimest lesson that a sovereign ever gave to his equals.' Acknowledges himself subject to the laws.

About the same time, we find a law of Theodosius II. which doth not show near so great a degree of wisdom. It prohibits as treasonable, not only the wearing of stuffs dyed of the colour of the imperial ornaments, but even keeping them in the house. This is a regulation in the true spirit of despotism. By another law, as prudent as the former is absurd, he fixed the period of thirty years undisturbed possession as sufficient to give real property. Nothing is more common under the last reigns than a mixture of good and bad laws, which are a certain proof of a capricious government, shifting with every wind of opinion, and destitute of any fixed plan. Two other laws of Theodosius.

Among many unconnected and confused facts, let us choose the most important, and, without entering into minute details, bring those that have an analogy to each other into one view. In the West were two great generals, whose rivalship became destructive to the state. Aetius was the terror of the barbarians; but, being jealous of Boniface, count of Africa, he endeavoured to ruin him at court by representing him as a rebel. The count, undeservedly condemned, invited the Vandals out of Spain into Africa, where, under the conduct of Rivalry of Aetius and Boniface.

their king Genseric, they laid waste the country with fire and sword. This general, being reinstated in his employments, attempted to prevail on the barbarians to retire; and, on their refusal, took arms against them, but was beaten. Except Cirtha and Carthage, the Romans retained no possessions in Africa, which the Vandals with impunity made the scene of their cruelty.

461. Death of Boniface. Boniface enjoyed the favour of Placidia, who was arbitress of the government, and beheld Aetius with an evil eye. However, this general prevented the effects of their hatred, by raising the standard of revolt; and, though defeated by his rival, gave him in the battle a wound of which he died in a short time. Measures being taken to arrest him, he took the road to Pannonia, in order to implore the assistance of the Huns; upon which, the court being struck with a panic, Placidia recalled him, and restored him to all his dignities, with the addition of that of patrician. Such is the punishment of revolt in a tottering ill governed state. Gaul, which was exposed a prey to the avarice of the magistrates, as well as to the arms of the barbarians, suffered incessantly new misfortunes. The peasants, under the name of Bagaudæ, rose in arms, and ravaged the country with all the fury of wild beasts. The Visigoths broke the treaty concluded with the Romans, and laid siege to Narbonne, which was successfully defended by the auxiliary Huns.

The Francs establish themselves in Gaul under Clodion in 438. Clodion, king of the Francs, seized upon Cambray, Tournay, and Amiens, in 438, which were ceded to him because he could not be driven out. Treves was a fourth time plundered by

the Francs, who likewise made themselves masters of Cologne. Genseric remained in peaceable possession of the best part of Africa, where he displayed the most fervent zeal for Arianism. The Suevi subdued Bœtica, and the other countries of Spain which were abandoned by the Vandals. In a word, nothing was to be seen in every quarter but massacres, revolutions, and dismemberments of the empire, the particulars of which would tire, without instructing, the reader.

Heresy of Nestorius.

In the East, new theological quarrels were fomented by Theodosius. Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, taught that there were two persons, as well as two natures, in Jesus Christ; and that Mary was not the mother of God, but the mother of Christ. The prelate, who had formerly persecuted the heretics, soon drew upon himself, by this subtile heresy, a storm which overwhelmed him. Though Pulcheria was against him, he was favoured by the emperor. The general council of Ephesus was assembled to decide the question, at which St Cyril of Alexandria presided; and the heresiarch was condemned and deposed at the first meeting. Cyril and the bishop of Ephesus were in their turn deposed in a packed assembly, held by John of Antioch, which the bishops had refused to attend. Mens minds were more and more inflamed. At last Theodosius approved the judgment of the council, and Nestorius was banished; but Nestorianism was not destroyed. It still subsists in several countries of the East.

431. Council of Ephesus.

In 435, the emperor ordered the books of the Nestorians to be publicly burnt, and pro-

438. Severities

against the Nestorians.

hibited, under pain of confiscation of goods, the granting to these innovators any place for holding an assembly; and, in cases of obstinacy afterwards, added the punishment of death. The bishops and clerks, infected with that error, were driven from their churches, and the laymen anathematized. It was not remembered that the progress of Arianism had been increased by such rigorous measures. Experience proved, and it is now universally agreed, that the church would have been better served with more moderation.

Law for enriching the churches.

The devotion of Theodosius dictated to him a law by which the possessions of ecclesiastics and monks, who died without heirs, were bestowed upon the churches or monasteries: before that time, they had escheated to the treasury. We may observe that the monks, long after this, retained the use and property of their goods.

438. Theodosian code.

Though few men were less capable than Theodosius II. of supporting the character of a legislator, yet he put in execution a plan of legislation which deserves our attention a few moments. Jurisprudence was embarrassed and disgraced by numberless laws, among which were found many contradictory or absurd. He therefore caused a code to be composed, containing only the laws of the Christian emperors, edicts, rescripts, ordinances, acts and decrees of the council, &c.; and, when he published it, declared that the empire should be bound only by these statutes. Valentinian III. established this code in the West; and the laws afterwards added to it were called *Novellæ*.

The critics have remarked great imperfections in that collection; a great number of mutilated, obscure, ill chosen, ill arranged laws, and some bearing marks of superstition. However, so far as it goes, they judge it preferable to that which Justinian substituted in its room. It is remarkable that the Theodosian code subsisted only fourscore and ten years in the East; whereas in the West it continued after the destruction of the empire. It was adopted by the Visigoths, but, in the ages of ignorance, fell into desuetude. In the sixteenth century it was revived; and Jacques Godefroy, a lawyer of Paris, enriched it with a commentary which is greatly esteemed. Remarks on this code.

The emperor, soon after the publication of his code, abrogated a pernicious law of Constantine, which prohibited the land-holders of Asia to dispose of their estates even by will, unless they had a house in Constantinople. The capitals increase but too much without taking such odious methods.

It is amazing that a devout prince should facilitate divorces, which Constantine and Honorius had rendered more difficult than formerly. Yet he abolished their laws on that subject as too severe, restoring the authority of the ancient Roman statutes, and the decisions of the ancient lawyers. We shall see the custom of divorces continue a long time after this. Law in favour of divorces.

When Theodosius made this last law, he was probably tainted with the passion of jealousy, of which his wife soon felt the effects. From his infancy a friendship had subsisted between him and Paulinus, one of the principal lords of the Paulinus put to death.

court. The empress Eudoxia, Athenais, likewise entertained the greatest esteem and gratitude for that nobleman, who had contributed to her rise, was fond of his company, made him her confidant, and profited by his advice; but their innocent correspondence appeared a crime in the eyes of the emperor. Paulinus was put to death by his orders; and Eudoxia, thinking herself dishonoured, obtained leave to retire to Jerusalem. Having taken with her a priest and a deacon, these men again awakened the suspicions of her husband; and count Saturninus, to whom his cruel revenge was intrusted, put them to an ignominious death without form of trial.

Eudoxia, or Athenais, retires.

The empress, no longer able to restrain her rage, caused Saturninus to be assassinated; upon which she was deprived of her attendants, and, being reduced to the rank of a private person, dedicated the remainder of her life to works of piety. Cyrus, a native of Egypt, a man of learning, and a good poet, who had risen by her favour to the rank of patrician, was some time after deprived of all his possessions, because the vanity of Theodosius was hurt by the acclamations of the people in his praise. The eunuch Chrysaphus now acquired an uncontrolled influence over the mind of the prince, and absolute dominion in the government. Even Pulcheria no longer retained any credit with her brother. That legislator showed himself an object of hatred and contempt; and every thing was transacted according to the dictates of passion.

441. Genseric

In the mean time, the barbarians were every day gaining ground. Carthage was taken by

Genseric; and though, when he undertook his African expedition, he was not master of a single ship, and his Vandals were utterly unacquainted with navigation, by a prodigious effort of genius he created a formidable naval power, with which he had already carried terror and desolation into Sicily. The eunuch Chrysaphus, fancying that he could vanquish him and recover his conquests, exhausted the empire in equipping a fleet of eleven hundred sail. But Genseric artfully drew him into a tedious negociation, in the course of which the Roman army being weakened, and Theodosius being obliged to employ his forces against the Huns, the Vandal found himself in a condition to prescribe what terms he pleased. Accordingly, he was acknowledged sovereign of Africa; and the only fruit of this vast armament was, that the barbarians on every side poured into the dominions of the Romans, while they were losing time and wasting their strength in a fruitless enterprise.

establishes a formidable naval power in Africa.

CHAPTER II.

CONQUESTS OF THE HUNS UNDER ATTILA. END OF THE REIGN OF THEODOSIUS THE YOUNGER.

The most dreadful of the barbarians were the Huns, at that time governed by Bleda and Attila, two brothers equal in authority, and rivals in valour. About six or seven years before, they had obliged Theodosius to make a dis-

Tribute paid to the Huns.

graceful treaty, by which he bound himself to restore the deserters, to pay every year a tribute of seven hundred pounds weight of gold, the double of the ancient tribute, and not to assist the enemies of the Huns. After this treaty, the two kings had carried their arms into Tartary, and overrun the country as far as the borders of China; by which expedition in a severe climate, the ferocity of their troops was still augmented. On their return to Europe, more haughty and enterprising than ever, and filled with contempt for the Romans, whom they looked upon as cowards, they broke the treaty on some frivolous pretence, crossed the Danube, laid waste Upper Mæsia, and penetrated to Naissa; after which they invaded Thrace, marking their way with piles of ruin and mountains of slain. A new treaty was concluded, but it only procured a suspension of arms for a few years.

Vast conquests of Attila.

The genius of Attila equalled his ambition; an artful politician and prudent general, notwithstanding his ardent courage, he had formed the most boundless plans of conquest; had murdered his brother Bleda, that he might enjoy undivided dominion; and subjected to his power an immense extent of country, from the Baltic on one side, to the Eastern Ocean on the other. He had received ambassadors from China; hemmed in the Roman empire, and threatened to destroy it. Though destitute of every principle of religion, he knew how to turn the vulgar superstition to his own advantage, and pretended to have been miraculously put in possession of a sword formerly adored by the Scythians as the symbol of their deity.

The people believed his enterprises inspired by the God of battles, and this opinion heightened the courage and ferocity of his soldiers.

Theodosius having conferred upon him the title of general of the Romans, he accepted it, but at the same time declared, that he still reserved the liberty of carrying on war against them, if they did not act in a manner agreeable to him; and that kings superior not only to the generals of the empire, but to the emperors themselves, were in the number of his slaves. Appointed general of the Romans.

Soon after Illyria, Thrace, Dacia, and Mæsia, suffered new ravages. Threescore and ten cities were stormed by the Huns, and they defeated two armies. Peace was afterwards purchased of them at the price of six thousand pounds weight of gold, and an annual tribute of a third of that sum. Money could not be collected but by oppression and violence. The tax-gatherers in some respects were worse than the barbarians. Opulent families fell into indigence, and numbers strangled themselves in despair, or famished themselves to death. 447. Obliges them to purchase a peace.

The more the emperor dreaded and courted Attila, the more despicable he rendered himself. The ambassadors of the Hun were loaded with presents; and if he had a mind to enrich any of his officers, he needed only send them to Constaninople. His pretensions increased in proportion to the proofs of cowardice given by the Romans; and a threatening of war was sufficient to obtain for him whatever he demanded. He despises them.

Treachery, which had been so often employed since honour and virtue had lost their influ- 449. Theodosius

attempts his assassination.

ence, at last appeared the sole resource against an invincible enemy. Theodosius, by the advice of Chrysaphus, resolved to procure his assassination. Immense treasures were promised to Edeco, Attila's envoy, if he would undertake the execution of this black conspiracy; to which he consented in appearance, and set out followed by an embassy, but, on his return, revealed the secret to his master. Attila dissembled, received the ambassadors sitting on a wooden throne, spoke to them with his ordinary firmness, but treated them kindly; and, in the mean time, took every proper method to procure irrefragable evidence of the treachery of the Romans.

Description of an entertainment given by Attila.

Priscus, who was an eyewitness, has given an account of this embassy, with some particulars, which will serve to show the genius of this conqueror, and the character of his nation. The king gave an entertainment to his whole court, where the guests were served in gold and silver plate; but he used only wooden platters, and tasted only of a single dish. Two bards sung his victories, whose strains animated the youth with martial enthusiasm, while the old men shed tears for not being longer able to signalize themselves in imitation of the hero. The entertainment was closed by the introduction of two buffoons; and, amidst the peals of laughter which they excited, the king still preserved his gravity. Nor did he show any pleasure but in caressing the youngest of his sons, who was the peculiar object of his tenderness.

That hero treats the emperor with contempt.

As soon as he had procured clear evidence of the plot formed against his life, he sent deputies to Constantinople, with orders to deliver

this message to the emperor, *That Attila and Theodosius were of a race equally noble; but Theodosius had degraded himself by becoming the slave of Attila, to whom he paid tribute. That he was only a vile perfidious slave, because he traiterously attempted to murder his master; and Attila pardoned him only on condition of his delivering up his eunuch, that he might be punished according to his deserts.* These thundering reproaches show more greatness than victory itself. The haughty conqueror suffered himself to be appeased by submissions and presents, and the worthless eunuch preserved his arbitrary power.

The heresy of Eutyches.

Such was the insensate passion of the Greeks for the subtilties and disputes of theology, notwithstanding the perils with which they were environed, that a new heresy on the mystery of the incarnation started up to throw the empire into fresh confusion. Nestorius, while he combated Arianism, had imagined that two natures in Jesus Christ constituted two persons. Eutyches, an enthusiastic monk, while he vented his fury against Nestorianism, concluded that unity of person supposed unity of nature, and that the humanity was absorbed in the divinity.

Favoured by the emperor and Chrysaphius.

The all powerful eunuch, and consequently the emperor, declared in his favour. A council of a hundred and thirty bishops held at Ephesus, condemned the doctrine of two natures in one person; but their votes were not free. Anathemas, depositions and banishments, were the fruits of the sophisms of Eutyches, whose heresy, though condemned in the council of Chalcedon held in 451, has still numerous followers in the East, as well as that of Nestorius. Till the ruin of the Greek empire, we shall see theologi-

cal disputes, varied under every form, produce intestine quarrels as fatal as the arms of the barbarians.

450. Death of Theodosius II.

Theodosius, on his return from a pilgrimage, died after a reign of forty-two years, without deserving any other title than that of *Calligraphes*, because he excelled in forming the letters of the alphabet. The walls of Constantinople, which in 447 were overthrown by a dreadful earthquake, were quickly rebuilt; but this is attributed to the ardor exerted by the *blue* and *green* factions, by which the people were divided in the games of the circus. In this whimsical nation, every thing bears the stamp of frivolity and fanaticism.

VALENTINIAN III. EMPEROR IN THE WEST. MARCIAN IN THE EAST.

450. Pulcheria marries Marcian.

Theodosius the younger having left only one daughter, who was married to Valentinian, the emperor of the West, he seemed to have the rightful claim to succeed; but his imbecility kept him inactive. Pulcheria seized the reins of government, and prosecuted Chrysaphus. After that eunuch was justly condemned, he was most iniquitously delivered up to the particular vengeance of a man whose father he had assassinated a number of years before. As the sovereign authority had not hitherto been intrusted to a single woman, she cast her eyes on Marcian, a soldier of fortune, whom she esteemed, and made him an offer of her hand,

upon condition that he would respect her virginity, which she had made a vow to preserve. Marcian, who was then fifty-eight years of age, promised what she required, and, having been married to her, was immediately crowned.

This prince was infirm, but bold, zealous, and vigilant. He greatly respected the empress, and applied most diligently to reform abuses, setting an example of frugality and justice. He passed some laws calculated for the relief of the people; but others, dictated by his piety, were not so conformable to sound policy. In opposition to an edict of Valentinian I., which declared void all donations made by women in favour of clerks and monks, he ordained that they should be valid. All exercise of Pagan worship was forbidden under pain of death; but he behaved with moderation to the heretics, showing favour to the orthodox, and endeavoured to conciliate the different parties. He was instructed by pope St Leo and Pulcheria.

Excellent government of that prince.

The Western empire, where Placidia governed in the name of her son, was ready to fall a prey to the barbarians; and, being oppressed by burdensome taxes, which always irritate the minds of the people, they were inclined to change their masters. Valentinian III., after having a long time promised to relieve the people of the provinces, at last published a law, by which the debts due to the treasury were remitted. He reproached himself with having so long deferred to make good his promises; and lamented the distress of the people, and the oppressions of his own officers, laying down this true and much neglected maxim, *Whatever*

Law of Valentinian for the relief of the people.

the labourer loses, is lost to the prince; the prosperity of the prince depending upon that of the labourer. The disgrace of a bad government is to make a display of excellent maxims, yet to act in direct opposition to them. Valentinian always persisted in ruining both the country and cities by his luxury, while his stupid indolence gave every opportunity to the enemy to continue their ravages. Placidia died, and, though she had her faults, every thing grew worse after her death.

The Saxons and Angles reduce Britain.

We have seen that the Romans, being no longer able to defend Britain, had already abandoned it. The Britons had several times in vain implored their assistance against the Picts and Scots; but even the great general, Aetius, believing that he could not comply with their wishes, they applied to the Saxons, settled at the mouth of the Elbe, who, with the Angles, very soon reduced that country which they came to deliver, and formed their Heptarchy upon the ruin of the liberty of the islanders. These seven kingdoms remained distinct till they were united by Egbert, the cotemporary of Charlemagne, as I shall have occasion to mention in the Modern History.

Genseric draws Attila into Gaul.

The loss of one fertile province, which, by its distance, prevented the same advantages being derived from it as formerly, might have been endured; but Attila threatened the very heart of the empire. After having hesitated whether he should attack the East or the West, he determined against the weakest, which had already suffered in so many different quarters. Genseric having quarrelled with Theodoric, king of the Visigoths, and being desirous to

embroil his affairs, invited the king of the Huns to penetrate into Gaul, who very easily found a pretence for making the invasion.

The demands of the king of the Huns.

Honoria, the daughter of the empress Placidia, who was made a nun, carried on a secret correspondence with Attila; and, having sent him a ring as a pledge of her resolution to marry him, and to transmit to him her title to the crown, he sent to demand this princess, and the half of the empire, to which he supposed her entitled. Valentinian answered, that Honoria was already married, and, besides, she had no right to any share of the empire, which was settled upon the males. By negotiating with the Romans and Visigoths at the same time, Attila concealed his intention of destroying both. Besides his power, he knew how to employ the address of a skilful politician.

451. Gaul ravaged by the Huns.

At the head of an army of five hundred thousand men, which consisted of a vast number of nations, led by their kings, the Gepidæ, Rugii, Turcilingi, Ostrogoths, and others, he marched along the bank of the Danube, and passed the Rhine. It is impossible to describe the dreadful ravages which were committed in Gaul between the Rhine, the Seine, the Marne, and the Moselle. All these countries were pillaged, the towns burnt, and the fields covered with dead bodies.

Aetius makes them retire.

The general Aetius advanced with a small army to Arles, and fortunately persuaded the king of the Visigoths, that both nations were equally involved in danger, and that Attila only endeavoured to divide, on purpose to destroy them. Theodoric joined the Romans; and Meroveus, king of the Franks, with the Burgun-

dians, Armoricæ, and several other nations, increased the army of Aetius, who hastened his march, and surprised Attila, who had taken possession of Orleans, obliging him to retire towards Belgia.

Bloody battle in Champagne.

Attila, enraged at the affront, and resolved to be revenged by coming to action, stopped in the plains of Champagne, in the diocese of Troyes as some say, or, according to others, of Chalons, where both armies met, and engaged with equal fury. A hundred and sixty thousand men at least were supposed to have fallen in this action. Jornandes reckons two hundred and fifty-two thousand. Theodoric was killed, and Attila, being in danger, ordered the retreat to be sounded.

Danger and retreat of Attila.

According to the custom of the barbarians, the waggons of the army formed a kind of rampart round his camp. Attila placed bodies of troops on all sides; and the enemy, who were exposed to a shower of arrows, resolved to reduce him by famine. It is reported of him, that he caused a pile to be erected of horse-saddles, on which he proposed to burn himself, if he was reduced to despair: but Aetius, dreading that the defeat of the Huns would render the Visigoths and Franks too powerful, persuaded the leaders of these nations to withdraw. Attila immediately retreated, and, though pursued by the Romans, reached Pannonia, and then got back to his own dominions. The most bloody battle that ever was fought, and his previous losses, for he was not at all sparing of the blood of his troops, had in a great measure destroyed his army.

However, the Romans had scarce begun to

recruit, when he poured upon Italy with fresh forces, spreading an universal alarm. Instead of defending the Alps, Ætius advised Valentinian to fly, and proposed to set the example; but this shameful proposal was rejected. The emperor, shut up in Rome, left the whole country beyond the Po without defence, in expectation that the barbarians would be satisfied with that prey. The Huns had already pillaged the capital of the Vindelici, at present Augsburg; passed the Julian Alps, besieged Aquileia, and took it by assault, destroying every thing in Venetia and Liguria. Attila, having found a picture at Milan, in which the emperor was painted, sitting on a throne of gold, with a multitude of Huns lying dead at his feet, caused it to be defaced, and himself to be painted sitting upon a throne, with the emperor standing before him, loaded with a bag of gold, which he was pouring out at his feet.

452. He laid waste Italy.

During these ravages, the inhabitants of Venetia and Emilia fled for shelter to the islands in the Gulf, where they built huts, from whence the city of Venice was formed, which will become famous in the Modern History.

Origin of Venice.

Ætius, having procured assistance from Marcian, cut in pieces some detachments of Huns, whom he found means to surprise; but these trifling advantages scarce quieting the dread with which the people were inspired, Valentinian sent to Attila to sue for peace. St Leo, a pontiff, who was equally respectable for his virtue and abilities, accompanied by two other deputies, softened the heart of this cruel warrior. They agreed upon a truce, and consented to pay a tribute. The conqueror withdrew, but

Attila spares Rome. His death. 452.

threatened to return into Italy, if Honoria, with all that belonged to her, was not sent after him. Attilla died the following year. He was called the *Scourge of God*. The Romans deserved that scourge.

Ruin of his empire.

He left several sons, who, by their dissensions, ruined his vast dominions, which is the common effect of conquests too far extended. The king of the Gepidæ, and the other vassals, following his example, revolted, and the barbarians were weakened by bloody wars. They formed several settlements in Illyria, Mæsia, Dacia, the Lesser Scythia, at the mouths of the Danube, and became the allies of that empire which they were tearing in pieces. The Ostrogoths, subjects of Attila, were the greatest gainers by the revolution. Marcian granted them all Pannonia, from Upper Mæsia to Noricum, and from Dalmatia to the Danube. We shall see them ruling nobly in Italy.

454. Vices of Valentinian.

Valentinian suffered no less from his own vices than from the arms of the barbarians, and, having given himself up to stupid indolence and debauchery, violated the wife of Maximus, a man of rank and power, who vowed vengeance for this affront. Ætius was the only person that could save the prince and the state; for which reason, Maximus, by means of Heraclius the eunuch, caused him to be suspected of rebellious purposes, and the emperor killed him with his own hand. He afterwards asked one of his officers, if he had not done right to free himself? *It is not for me to presume to judge your actions*, replied the officer, *but I think you have cut off your right hand with your left.* Though ambition might have inspired that general with

some faults, yet it was soon found that the loss of him was the ruin of the empire.

455. Maximus succeeds.

Maximus having no longer any obstruction, caused the emperor to be assassinated, and himself to be proclaimed. He was soon overpowered by the weight of the sovereign authority, and every thing disgusted and terrified him. His reign necessarily passed like a dream. He had compelled Eudoxia, the widow of Valentinian, to marry him, and, to win her affections, protested that love was the cause of his offence. The princess shuddered with indignation, and secretly invited Genseric to come and deliver her, promising to lead him by the hand into Rome.

He is assassinated. Rome pillaged by Genseric.

The king of the Vandals embarked his forces, and Maximus was assassinated in attempting to fly. Genseric arrived, and Rome was given up to be pillaged. He carried off immense riches; the sacred vessels, which had been religiously respected by Alaric; one half of the valuable covering of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, which was of gilded bronze; an infinite number of statues; and a great many illustrious captives, among whom was Eudoxia herself, and her two daughters. Marcian claimed the princesses, but was refused; for Genseric did not even respect the empire of Constantinople.

Avitus assumes the purple, and dethroned by Ricimer.

Maximus reigned only three months. Avitus, of Gaulish origin, greatly esteemed as an individual, assumed the purple, and reigned scarcely one year. Count Ricimer, the son of a prince of the Suevi, despised this new emperor, who made himself contemptible by his irregularities, and, having stirred up a sedition against him, attacked him in the neighbourhood of

Placentia, where he took him prisoner, and caused him to be consecrated a bishop. This was a common method of punishing those that were dethroned, or of rendering them incapable of new attempts. The custom which was established afterwards by the barbarians of making them turn monks, seems better; it did not expose the office of bishop to contempt. Avitus, afraid of being put to death, tried to save himself by flying to his own country, but died upon the road. The throne continued vacant several months. Could it be aimed at by any reasonable degree of ambition?

457. Deaths of Marcian and Pulcheria.

From the time of Theodosius, Marcian, though too ignorant to escape errors, was the only person who seemed worthy of the sovereign power. He died in the seventh year of his reign. Pulcheria having died four years before him, the Greek church instituted a festival in honour of them.

The general council of Chalcedon, which was assembled in 451, by the zeal of Marcian and Pulcheria, having condemned the *doctrine of* Eutyches, made some regulations which it is of importance to mention in this place. By them the monks were subjected to the jurisdiction of the ordinary, and prohibited from intermeddling in affairs, either ecclesiastic or secular, without the express orders of the bishop, in cases of necessity. The clergy were prohibited from being translated to one church from another, under pain of excommunication. They fixed the rank of the see of Constantinople next to Rome. The Greeks wished afterwards that the two sees should be perfectly equal, since Constantinople was the capital of the East, as Rome was

of the West. Saint Leo constantly rejected this decree, and maintained, that Alexandria and Antioch ought to preserve the preeminence. Since that council, the title of patriarchal has been given to the churches of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, and Jerusalem.

Law of Valentinian III. in favour of the popes.

Valentinian III. on account of Saint Hilary of Arles, who had been condemned by Saint Leo, made a decree in 446, prohibiting all bishops from making any innovations without the authority of the pope; likewise declaring, that all ordinances of the see of Rome should be a law to all other bishops; and also, that if any prelate, summoned by the bishop of Rome, refused to appear before his tribunal, he should be compelled by the governor of the province. By procuring this edict, Leo greatly increased his authority. Appeals to Rome were unknown before the council of Sardis in 347; and that council only decreed, that if a bishop, who was condemned, desired a new trial before the council, they who examined the case should apply to the bishop of Rome, who would appoint judges, if he saw reason, for renewing the trial. The greater credit the popes acquired, the more it was to be expected they would extend their prerogative. They were not all so deserving as Leo.

Other laws.

In 452, the same emperor, tired with numberless complaints against the sentences of the bishops, prohibited the clergy from meddling in any causes but those of religion; nevertheless allowing bishops to be chosen as arbiters, if agreeable to both parties; but declaring, that a claimant of the laity might prosecute a cler-

gyman before secular judges in all civil or criminal matters. Baronius taxes this law with impiety, as if Jesus Christ had come to withdraw a considerable part of the people from the authority of the laws. It is very extraordinary to find men judging of things, not from their nature, but from what they happen to be accidentally against their nature.

Valentinian, by a very severe law, forbade the destruction of tombs, into which avarice, on pretence of driving out idolatry, went in search of treasures.

SUCCESSORS OF VALENTINIAN III. AND MARCIAN TO ANASTASIUS.

CHAPTER I.

TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF ITALY BY ODOACER.

History becomes less interesting.

HISTORY becomes more obscure and less interesting, in proportion as the ravages of the barbarians increase, and morals, humanity, science, and reason, disappear under the ruins of the empire. It is therefore sufficient to have a general idea of the principal facts. A detail of particulars would be equally useless and tiresome. What does not deserve to be known, deserves as little to be written.

The general Aspar. Leo emperor of the East. 447.

Aspar, general of the troops of the East, an Alan by birth, and a zealous Arian, was desirous of reigning under the name of another, as he despaired of uniting the suffrages in his own favour. He therefore caused the election to fall upon Leo, who was only a tribune; and the new emperor was crowned by the patriarch of Constantinople. This was the first sovereign crowned by a bishop. Leo had promised the general to make one of his children Cæsar, and did not execute his promise. *Does it become an emperor*, said Aspar one day to him, *to break his*

word? It becomes him still less, replied **Leo**, *to be dictated to like a slave.*

Majorianus proclaimed in the West.

In the West, Ricimer having dethroned Avitus, likewise created an emperor, whom he flattered himself with the hopes of governing; and was in like manner mistaken in his choice. Majorianus was no sooner proclaimed, than he showed himself capable of governing. He began with enacting laws for the re-establishment of good order, cancelled all debts due to the treasury; and ordered that the taxes should be raised by the governors of the provinces, instead of the officers of the exchequer, whose exactions were more oppressive than the taxes themselves.

His laws concerning monasteries.

The monasteries being converted into prisons, where many parents, actuated by motives of avarice or ambition, shut up their daughters from their infancy; though their disposition often rendered them entirely unfit for a religious life, he prohibited the veil from being given till the age of forty, and condemned the parents to forfeit a third of their property if they committed this violence, to which he gives the name of parricide. A similar regulation was made by pope Leo. But this law of Majorianus was abrogated by his successor, as well as another, by which all widows under forty were obliged to marry again within five years, under penalty of forfeiting half their property to their heirs at law. The first law concerning monasteries has at different times been attempted to be put in force, but it has been prevented by numberless obstacles.

Defeats the Visigoths in Gaul.

The empire stood in need of a warlike prince still more than of a legislator; for, amidst the

convulsions raised in it by the barbarians, the laws were without vigour. The Vandals and Moors having made an attack upon the coasts of Campania, were defeated at Sinuessa, and Majorianus resolved to carry the war into their country; but it was necessary first to re-establish tranquillity in Gaul, where Theodoric II. king of the Visigoths, stirred up the different nations, attacked the centre of the provinces, and even made himself master of Lyons. Egidius, who, by a kind of miracle, united the dignity of king of the Francs to the office of general of the Romans, gained considerable advantages over Theodoric. Some time after the emperor arrived, and after defeating the Visigoths, concluded a treaty, by which they engaged to succour him against the Vandals. He afterwards passed the Pyrenees, with a resolution to embark at Carthagena. But Genseric having a secret correspondence on board the fleet, found means to destroy it; and the expedition being no longer possible, peace was concluded, which, however, the Vandals did not long observe.

461. Ricimer gets rid of Majorianus.

Ricimer, dissatisfied with an emperor who would not suffer himself to be governed, formed a plot against his life, of which Majorianus fell a victim, and Ricimer set up in his room one Severus, but who he was is not known, his name being but once mentioned in history. Four years after, this phantom having disappeared, we know not how, he governed the state with absolute authority during a year and a half. We shall omit several wars of the barbarians with each other, or with the Romans, because they present us with nothing interest-

ing. It is sufficient to remark, that Egidius having become odious on account of his tyranny, was driven out by the Francs, and Childeric, whose crown had been conferred upon him, was restored.

467. Anthemius emperor. However low the Romans were sunk, they could no longer bear the tyranny of a Suevian, and therefore applied to Leo for an emperor, who sent them Anthemius, grandson of him that governed under Theodosius the younger. Count Ricimer married one of his daughters, and left him the name of emperor, till he had a reason for divesting him of it.

Maxim of Leo. Leo, like those weak princes to whom the decay of the empire is to be ascribed, was deficient in genius and political skill. It is true, one of his laws contains this admirable maxim, *Justice being the noblest prerogative of sovereign majesty, princes ought not to think themselves indulged in greater latitude than private persons.* But for a long time people contented themselves with fine maxims, without joining to them what is most essential, a just and prudent conduct. Leo commanded every person to be baptized, under pain of banishment, and made it capital to relapse into idolatry after the performance of the ceremony. Can Christians then be made by a forced baptism? *It is the peculiar character of the true religion not to constrain, but persuade.* * In a word, the emperor built churches, but he could not govern.

His armament against Genseric. Seeing that the fleets of Genseric insulted Greece, he exhausted himself in making preparations against this formidable enemy. The

* Athan.

armament cost him 130,000 lib. of gold; and he gave the command of it to Basiliscus, his brother-in-law, a man equally destitute of courage and abilities, who suffered himself to be corrupted by the promises of the Arians, and the money of the barbarians. The fleet was burnt near Carthage, the Romans cut in pieces, and Genseric reaped the peaceable fruits of his triumph during the remainder of his reign, without any person daring to attack him. The barbarians had founded their power by war. They knew how to support it by an union of policy with force.

His faults increase. After this disaster, Leo suspected every thing, and sought a support from the Isaurians, a nation of mountaineers, who subsisted by plunder, and had often ravaged the provinces of Asia. For this purpose he drew to court Zeno, a man distinguished among them for his birth, but void of every species of merit, whom he made his son-in-law, general of the army, and afterwards consul. These honours exciting the jealousy of the haughty Aspar, Zeno, in a short time, fled to Sardica, to escape a conspiracy. Aspar pressing the emperor to give one of his sons the quality of Cæsar, as he had engaged when he assumed the diadem, Leo was forced to yield, and decided in favour of Patricius, the youngest. After this, he rendered his government more contemptible and odious, by causing Aspar and the eldest of his sons to be massacred, and Patricius with difficulty escaped, covered with wounds.

472. Revolt and death of Ricimer. Ricimer, dreading to suffer the same fate at Rome that Aspar had done at Constantinople, took up arms against the emperor Anthemius, when Leo sent Olybrius to reconcile them; but

this man, instead of fulfilling his commission, suffering himself to be proclaimed by the rebels, Ricimer gained a battle, took the city of Rome, abandoned it to pillage, and, after causing Anthemius to be murdered in his presence, died in a short time of a violent distemper. He had four times disposed of the empire, treating the sovereigns like slaves, whose disobedience he looked upon as a capital crime. Olybrius scarce survived him three months, and was succeeded by Glycerius, who is only known by name. The empire of the West was confined to Italy, Dalmatia, and a small part of Gaul; and the Ostrogoths, who were settled in Pannonia, still threatened it with new dismemberments. At last Glycerius was dethroned by Nepos, an officer of the Eastern emperor, and became bishop of Salona.

475. Zeno, a bad emperor of the East.

In the mean time Leo died, leaving a son of the same name, who did not long survive him, and bequeathed the empire to Zeno. This barbarian, stained with infamy, pillaging his subjects, and affecting a ridiculous devotion, made himself odious even to his mother-in-law, to whom he was indebted for his fortune. A conspiracy was immediately formed against him, when the dastardly Basiliscus was set upon the throne, and the dastardly Zeno fled to the mountains of Isauria. Two years after he was restored; and though he swore to preserve the life of Basiliscus and his children, he thought that he did not perjure himself by ordering them to be starved to death. 477.

Progress of the Visigoths in Spain and Gaul.

Thus, disorder and confusion reigned in both empires. But the Western was on the verge of ruin. Euric, king of the Visigoths, had

subdued all Spain, except Galicia, where the Suevi maintained themselves; and he wanted only Auvergne to be master of all the southern part of Gaul, as far as the Rhone, which Nepos was constrained to cede to him in 474. The emperor being desirous of securing the rest of Gaul, commanded the patrician Orestes to march thither with an army. This officer, who had formerly been secretary to Attila, collected a body of troops, and, forming a design of dethroning the emperor, marched to Ravenna, which Nepos quitted by flight, and Orestes raised to the throne his own son Romulus, surnamed Augustus, commonly called Augustulus, on account of his youth, or from contempt for his person. In him will end the empire of the West.

CHAPTER II.

ODOACER DESTROYS THE EMPIRE OF THE WEST. IS DETHRONED BY THEODORIC.

ODOACER, whose original is unknown, at the head of several tribes of barbarians, particularly the Heruli, who came from Prussia, made his way into Italy, with a view to establish himself there. It is pretended that his army, being in the pay of the empire, demanded one third of the lands as a just recompense for their services; and, disgusted at the refusal of Orestes, chose for their leader Odoacer, a private soldier in the imperial guards, a man of low

476. Conquest of Italy by Odoacer.

birth, but designed by nature for great actions. This general attacked Pavia, where Orestes had shut himself up, and, after having taken the place by assault, and cut off that patrician's head, flew to Ravenna, gave Augustulus his life, who had voluntarily quitted the purple, and, confining him in a castle, with a considerable pension, subdued all Italy, of which he styled himself king. Genseric ceded *to him* the island of Sicily, except the city Lilybæum, with a reservation of the rights of sovereignty, and an annual tribute. An able conqueror only needed to appear. This sudden revolution was become unavoidable.

Observation on the fall of the empire.

Such was the end of the Western empire 1229 years after the building of Rome. 'Rome,' says Montesquieu, 'rose to a great height of power, because she had waged only successive wars; each nation, by an inconceivable good fortune, attacking her only after another had been ruined; but she was destroyed, because all the nations attacked her at once, and broke in upon her from all quarters.' We *have* observed, in many parts of this work, the particular causes which at a distance prepared its fall.

Odoacer governs with prudence.

The people gained by their change of master, Odoacer procuring for them peace and plenty. He retained the same laws, the same offices, the form of the government, and diminished the imposts. Though an Arian, he honoured the holy bishops, and gave the Catholics no disturbance. It is an interesting sight to behold the barbarians make their government beloved, after so many Romans had reigned like barbarians or idiots. The con-

queror was even political enough to send to Zeno the imperial ornaments, and to request the dignity of patrician, as if he had been chosen by the senate to defend the West; a method highly proper for gaining the hearts of the conquered people. The emperor, in his answer to the deputies of Odoacer, desired them to have recourse to Nepos, the lawful sovereign; and yet gave Odoacer the title of Patrician, in a letter which he wrote to him. This was doubtless the effect of a well-founded fear.

Zeno hated and despised by the Ostrogoths.

This mean-spirited emperor, as well by his treachery as his stupidity and weakness, drew upon himself the hatred and contempt of the Ostrogoths who were settled in Pannonia and Thrace; a set of dangerous confederates, and constant enemies the moment they could find a pretext for a quarrel. They were then governed by two kings, who bore the common name of Theodoric; the one surnamed the Squint-eyed, the other Amalus. The latter was a young prince of uncommon merit, whom we shall soon see master and legislator of Italy. He had been brought up at Constantinople, to which he was sent as a hostage almost from his cradle; and, on account of his fidelity, had been loaded by Zeno with the highest honours, the rank of patrician, the title of general, and even of the emperor's son of arms; a kind of adoption by which the father and son were bound mutually to assist each other in war. This custom of the barbarians probably gave rise to the ancient military chivalry.

The two Theodorics join against the emperor.

Zeno armed the two Theodorics against each other, betrayed them, and turned their resentment against himself. The provinces were ravaged to the very gates of the capital. Though he constantly purchased peace, he never could observe it. After the death of Theodoric the squint-eyed, he endeavoured to gain Amalus by bestowing on him new titles, erecting a statue in his honour, and ceding to him some territory; but it would have been a greater happiness had the emperor known how to keep him.

Zeno's edict for reconciling the theologists.

At the same time Zeno, endeavouring to pacify the theologians, only kindled the fire of disputes. The council of Chalcedon being attacked by a multitude of enthusiasts, as well as that of Ephesus, he published an edict of union, called the ἑνωτικον, to establish uniformity of belief; a thing still more difficult than to defend the empire against the barbarians. By this edict he anathematizes Nestorius and Eutyches, and proposes a formulary of doctrine, to which all his subjects should be bound to conform. But though it was strictly consonant to the Catholic opinions, the orthodox almost unanimously expressed a violent disapprobation, because the prince dared to pronounce on matters of faith, and seemed to think that the decisions of the council of Chalcedon might be rendered more valid by his confirmation. The quarrels therefore continued, and still with the same effects.

Cabals and revolts.

The rest of Zeno's reign is only a continued series of confusion, and scenes of cruelty, from which humanity shrinks with horror. His mother-in-law and wife having conspired the de-

struction of Illus, master of the offices, who had raised him to the throne, that officer revolted, and gave the title of emperor to Leontius; but Theodoric being sent against the rebels, gained a complete victory, and they were beheaded. The king of the Ostrogoths afterwards defeated the Bulgarians, a nation first settled on the banks of the Wolga, from whence they removed to the neighbourhood of the Danube. We shall find them make a great figure in the sequel of this history. The emperor soon quarrelled with his deliverer.

Theodoric engages in the conquest of Italy.

Theodoric having taken up arms against him, advanced into the neighbourhood of Constantinople, which he threatened with a siege, when an interview was proposed to him, and he demanded permission to make a conquest of Italy. *If I succeed*, said he to Zeno, *I will hold my new kingdom of you; If I perish in the attempt, you will be freed from the subsidy which you are obliged to pay us.* To this proposal the emperor consented, and transferred his right to Theodoric; a cession which has always been looked upon by the Goths as absolute and perpetual, though the Romans pretended the contrary. It is not to be questioned that the kingdom of Italy, though really independent, yet, in appearance, acknowledged the sovereignty of the Eastern empire. Before Theodoric finished his conquest, Zeno, by a miserable death, put an end to a reign which had been productive of nothing but mischief.

491. He defeats Odoacer.

This conqueror, who deserves to be ranked among the greatest monarchs, followed by almost his whole nation, the old men, women,

and children, accompanying his army, after defeating the Gepidæ, who disputed his passage, gained a victory over Odoacer between Aquileia and the Julian Alps, another at Verona, and a third on the banks of the Addua, Adda. Odoacer, who had behaved with his usual courage, seeing his efforts to no purpose, shut himself up in Ravenna, where he was soon invested. The siege lasted two years and a half, and, the port being shut, the inhabitants were reduced by a famine, so dreadful as to oblige them to feed upon leather, to the necessity of surrendering or perishing.

494. Theodoric murders Odoacer.

A negotiation was entered into, by which Odoacer yielded Ravenna and all Italy to Theodoric, reserving to himself the honours of royalty; but, a few days after, the victor slew him with his own hand. They who attempt to justify Theodoric, pretend that he had discovered a plot against his person; but unprejudiced authors forbear attempting to wash off the stain of this black treachery; which, however, was in some measure compensated by a reign that will be memorable through all ages. In the whole history of the emperors, we find few models of government so perfect as that of Theodoric; and the recital of some particulars of it cannot fail to convey instruction.

CHAPTER III.

THEODORIC THE GREAT ESTABLISHED IN ITALY.

Theodoric not altogether unlearned.

If Theodoric, as is asserted, contrary to all probability, by an ancient anonymous writer, was so illiterate that he could neither read nor write, he must have been a prodigy to govern with all the judgment and prudence of a man perfectly well educated. According to Procopius, he forbid the children of the Goths from study, under pretence, that, *after standing in awe of a rod, they would tremble at sight of a sword.* But such tales are more than doubtful. Not to mention, that, in his youth, he passed ten years at Constantinople, where a person of his genius could not fail of receiving some tincture of literature, he showed too much esteem for learned men, and granted them too great a share of his favour, to be suspected of gross ignorance. The first offices were filled by Boetius, Cassiodorus, and other men of abilities. Theodoric's letters contain the highest encomiums on learning; and can we suppose that his secretary, Cassiodorus, would have exposed him to ridicule, by making him affect to commend a thing of which he was entirely ignorant? Besides, it is observed, that Dion Cassius, in a history which he wrote of the Goths, affirms them not to have been inferior in science to the Greeks.

Italy happy under his government.

The happiness which Italy had enjoyed under Odoacer, was increased under the new monarch. The Goths had only a third part of the lands, and the distribution was made in the least oppressive manner possible. They were subjected to taxes as well as the Romans. *It is not force, but justice that ought to hold the sceptre,* said Theodoric to his subjects in general. *You live in the same empire, therefore be friends. Let the Goths love the Romans as their neighbours and brethren, and the Romans regard the Goths as their defenders.*

Economy and plenty.

The treasury was filled by a prudent economy, which, without burdening the people, supplied funds for great enterprises. So great was the plenty, that three score sacks of wheat were commonly sold for an *aureus*, a piece of gold worth about 25 denarii, or 16s. 1¼d.; and so strict was the police, that people might travel in the utmost security either by day or night.

Legislation and justice.

In a word, the Roman police, laws, and customs, still subsisted, to which even the Goths in essential matters were subjected; though, in those of less importance, they were permitted to follow their ancient usages. They had a Gothic count for their judge, who took a Roman assessor, when one of that nation happened to be a party. If both parties were Romans, the cause was tried before Roman magistrates. *Let other conquerors,* says Theodoric, in one of his letters, *pillage or destroy the cities they have taken. For our part, we desire to make the vanquished regret that they were not sooner subjected to our dominion.* He had the administration of justice so much at heart, that he caus-

ed some judges to be beheaded for having protracted a suit three years.

Duels prohibited.

Almost all the barbarous nations decided their differences by single combat; but this custom was proscribed by Theodoric as execrable. It was his aim to unite, in the character of the Goths, the Roman humanity with their national bravery. It was his common saying, that *the life of a man could not be too dearly purchased at any price.* Never had the Romans been inspired with such principles of humanity.

Theodoric decides who is true pope.

His conduct with regard to religion was always regulated by this maxim, which was peculiar to him. *We have no authority over religion, because belief ought to be free.* Though of the Arian sect, he honoured virtuous Catholics, and maintained order and peace. Symmachus and Laurentius contending by force of arms for the see of Rome, he ordered that he who had been first elected, by a majority of voices, should be deemed the lawful bishop; but the schism continuing, he assembled councils to determine the dispute, and, by his authority, enforced the execution of the sentence, which was given in favour of Symmachus.

Symmachus justifies himself.

In one of these councils the pope cleared himself by oath of some accusations brought against him, and procured a decree, confirming a writing of the deacon Ennodius, which bears, that *the holy see gives impeccability to those who fill it, or rather, that God permits none to rise to it except those whom he has predestined to be saints;* a striking proof of the power which prejudice had already gained over men of weak minds.

This decree was afterwards used by Gregory VII. as a foundation for some of his pretensions.

Politics and alliances of Theodoric.

Few politicians have equalled Theodoric in the art of managing the interests of a nation, settling it on a firm footing, and preventing the enterprises of its neighbours. Without drawing a sword, after the death of Odoacer, he enjoyed his conquest as if it had been a peaceable inheritance; formed alliances with the barbarous nations round him; married the daughter of Clovis, who, in 486, had annihilated the Roman power in Gaul by the defeat of Syagrius; gave one of his daughters to Alaric, king of the Visigoths; another to the son of Gondebald, king of the Burgundians; and his sister to Trasamond, king of the Vandals. Far from fomenting the quarrels of those princes in order to weaken them by help of one another, and aggrandize himself at their expense, he laboured to inspire them with a spirit of peace, concord, and humanity; but, notwithstanding his advice and remonstrances, the ambitious Clovis having defeated Alaric, and made himself master of great part of his territories, Theodoric sent an army to the assistance of the Visigoths, and preserved the shattered remains of their monarchy, not so much with a view of appropriating it to himself, as of setting bounds to that conqueror's ambition.

He employs men of uncommon merit.

That great king was principally indebted for his success to his talent of discovering, and his care of rewarding and employing, real merit. One of his favourites was Artemidorus, an illustrious Greek, with whom he had formed a connexion at Constantinople, and who, with-

out descending to intrigue or flattery, employed his credit only for the sacred purpose of promoting the good of the subjects. Liberius, who till the revolution had been inviolably attached to Odoacer, being made captain of the guards, served his new master with the same fidelity he had shown to the old; managed the finances with uncommon integrity and economy; subjected the barbarians to the rules of discipline; presided over the distribution of lands, and, by an almost unexampled adherence to the rules of equity, closely united the two nations. Ibas, Tolonic, and the other generals, always returned from their expeditions with victory.

To conclude the list, Cassiodorus, who was invested with all dignity; quæstor, which answers to what is now called chancellor in France; master of the offices, now grand master; patrician, consul, captain of the guards, and even general of the army;—Cassiodorus, I say, in the exercise of every one of these offices, displayed equal virtue and ability. If, according to Mr Le Beau's observation, in the letters which he wrote for Theodoric, *the hand of the secretary be too often visible, and the majesty of the great monarch debased by the style of a declaimer*, it is a consequence of the depravation of taste, to which even the greatest genius is obnoxious. But this ought to heighten our admiration of that virtuous policy which directed the Gothic prince, and was expressed by the organ of the minister. Let us return to the history of the empire; though, from this period, it is not very interesting. We shall therefore content ourselves with giving a few

Cassiodorus.

general ideas, till we come to the reign of Justinian.

ANASTASIUS.

491. Anastasius emperor in the East.

LONGINUS, the brother of Zeno, who was as contemptible and odious as that emperor, flattered himself in vain with the hopes of the throne. The empress Ariadne loved Anastasius, the *silentiary* of the palace, an officer of low rank and obscure birth, and took her measures so as to get him proclaimed. Euphemius, the patriarch, who detested him for being an Eutychian, had formerly driven him out of the church, threatening to cut off his hair, and expose him to the derision of the populace; nor would he consent to crown him till he signed a profession of his faith, with a promise to support the council of Chalcedon. In a short time after, Euphemius made himself suspected of favouring the Isaurians, who were in rebellion; and Anastasius having defeated them, sent him the following message: *Your prayers in favour of your friends have not been hearkened to.* He then accused him before an assembly of the bishops, and banished him, after they had pronounced the sentence of deposition.

Encourages the factions of the circus.

These preludes foreboded fresh disturbances in ecclesiastical affairs, in which the emperors had intermeddled with very little discretion;

but a still more conspicuous fault was, the encouraging one of the factions, which had sprung up from the prevailing rage for public diversions. The *greens*, the *blues*, and the *reds*, these were the colours by which the charioteers in the circus were distinguished, were as violently exasperated against one another as the parties of Marius and Sylla had been, when the liberty of Rome and the empire of the world was the subject of contention. Instead of stifling these unlucky and absurd dissensions by prudent attention, Anastasius favoured one of the parties, which, of course, made them more violent, and occasioned dreadful massacres, in one of which no less than three thousand men were murdered. The extravagance of the Athenians upon similar subjects had never occasioned any bloodshed.

Instances of his prudence and goodness.

Anastasius has been commonly represented as a bad prince, a hypocritical devotee, an unjust avaricious persecutor. However, his reign affords instances of conduct highly laudable. He gave great application to business; was a good economist; beneficent, and abstemious in his pleasures; he banished informers out of Constantinople; forbid the judges to obey the particular rescripts of the sovereign, if they were contrary to the public good, or the established laws; abolished the inhuman combats of men with wild beasts, and the sale of offices, which was an illegal practice introduced by avarice; he suppressed the χρυσαργυρον, that odious tax which was laid upon all kinds of commodities, from which even beggary was not exempted, and which brought great sums of money into the treasury. A festival was insti-

tuted at Edessa to celebrate the abolition of this tax.

Cabades king of Persia, dethroned and restored.

The emperor defeated and chastised the Isaurians, but he was not so fortunate against the Persians. No treaty could extinguish the aversion in which the Romans and that people held one another, from the time of the unfortunate expedition under Crassus. Perosus, king of the Persians, had lately perished in a war with the Nephtalite Huns, whom he had irritated by a piece of horrid treachery. His son Cabades having abolished some of the customs of his country, and disturbed the peace of society, by making women common, provoked his people to dethrone him; but the generosity of the Huns, for these people were susceptible of elevated sentiments, afforded him an asylum. He was restored; and, profiting by his disgrace, formed a better system for his future government. The Persians wanted the Armenians, who were Christians, to submit to their religion, and join in worshipping fire, which occasioned a rebellion; but Cabades pacified them, by restoring the free exercise of *their* religion, and employed his arms against the Romans.

A disgraceful peace with the Persians.

Anastasius having refused to pay a sum of money which he demanded, Cabades took up arms, and made himself master of the famous town of Amida, which had been fruitlessly attempted by Sapor. He got admittance by a tower, which was guarded by some drunken monks, or rather ought to have been guarded, but, according to some authors, they treacherously opened the gates to him. The emperor sent some generals to oppose him, among whom

a misunderstanding subsisted, which proved a source of new disgraces. They made an unsuccessful attempt upon Amida, and then purchased a peace, by paying a very considerable sum of money; the treaty being concluded in 505, after a war of three years. The enemy restored Amida, and had no more than seven days provision left when the Romans, who besieged it, purchased that shameful peace.*

The same year the empire suffered a misfortune equally humiliating. Theodoric seized Pannonia; and Pitzia, one of his generals, with an army of two thousand five hundred men, gained a complete victory. The speech which he made to his troops before the action is the more worthy of notice, as it does not resemble the studied harangues given us by historians. It is the powerful and ingenuous expression of his feelings. *You know your king, my companions*, said he; *our enemies likewise know him, for they have seen him fighting. Show them that you resemble him. Though absent, he sees you, and none of the noble actions you are now going to perform shall be unknown to him.* This general forbade his soldiers to carry off any spoils, but to leave the dead with their arms, to prove that the courage of the Goths was roused by glory alone. On this occasion they seemed to be Spartans.

The Ostrogoths seize Pannonia, 505.

So many victories gained by the barbarians, which had brought them several times to the gates of Constantinople, made the emperor a-

Wall built by Anastasius

* The people of the Eastern empire were commonly called *Romans* till the time of Charlemagne, when the name of the *Greek* empire was introduced.

to protect Constantinople.

fraid of their making fresh incursions, and laying waste the country. To put a stop to these invasions, he caused a wall to be built, which reached from the Euxine sea to the Propontis, being a space of four hundred and twenty stadia, or eighteen leagues, about thirteen leagues distant from the city. Its thickness was twenty feet, with towers at certain distances; but such an immense construction could not make up for the loss of ancient valour. Anastasius made some weak attempts to be revenged of Theodoric, by sending a fleet to insult the coasts of Italy, and by honouring Clovis with the title of patrician, or, as some say, that of consul; but Clovis made no attempt in favour of the Romans; and Theodoric equipped a fleet, which very soon put a stop to their piracies.

The first religious war.

The church, the enemy of blood, had frequently been imbrued with it from theological disputes; but religious wars had been hitherto unknown. We come now to mention the first instance of that dreadful scourge which has been eloquently lamented by so many Christians, and which was the offspring of fanaticism, party spirit, prejudices the most opposite to the gospel, and passions the most destructive to society. Anastasius favoured the Eutychians, and provoked the Catholics, whose zeal was not always void of acrimony. The popes had excommunicated Acacius, formerly patriarch of Constantinople, because he had communicated with some heretical prelates, or who were suspected of heresy. The condemnation of Acacius was become a necessary proof of orthodoxy, as the condemnation of St Athanasius had formerly been reckoned a clear proof of Arianism. Ana-

stasius found himself involved in a quarrel with the holy see, because he had refused to subscribe it, and to abandon the ἑνωτικον of Zeno. It was his desire that nobody should be molested about the council of Chalcedon, but little respect was paid to his will. The less it was regarded, the more did he expose it by acts of absolute power.

Violent sedition of the patriarch Macedonius.

Having sent one day to demand the act from the patriarch Macedonius, by which he obliged himself, on ascending the throne, to defend the doctrine of the council, an act which, he said, tarnished the imperial dignity, Macedonius refused to deliver it. The emperor dissembled for some time, and then transferred the privilege of an asylum from the church of Macedonius to the Eutychians, which instantly kindled the flame of sedition. Two hundred monks came from Syria on purpose to expel the patriarch; another legion of them flocked from Palestine for his defence, and they quarrelled even in the church. Anastasius caused the acts of the council of Chalcedon, which had been refused to him, to be carried off, and, having torn them, threw them into the fire. Two impostors having accused Macedonius of being guilty of some infamous crimes, he vindicated himself, by proving that he was an eunuch; but, however, he was sent into banishment, where he died.

514. Anastasius insulted on a charge of heresy.

The seditions became daily more and more violent, and the emperor was publicly insulted on a charge of heresy. His statues were thrown down; a monk and a nun, who were in his confidence, were both stabbed, and their bodies

dragged through the streets. Severe punishments provoked the popular fury, till at last Vitalianus, grandson of the famous Aspar, declared himself the avenger of the faith, by raising an army of sixty thousand men against the sovereign. He passed the Great Wall, and encamped at the gates of Constantinople.

Procius saves Constantinople.

Proclus, a natural philosopher of Athens, not the Platonist, whose works are still extant, came to serve in the army of Anastasius. He is said to have burnt the enemy's fleet either with mirrors or an inflammable powder made of sulphur; but it is certain that the fleet was burnt; that Vitalianus made new preparations; that Anastasius promised to reform whatever he had done against the Catholic religion, and broke his promise, after having procured a peace upon that condition.

518. Death of the emperor.

Three years after this emperor died, when almost ninety years old. Some say that he was killed by lightning; others that he became mad from divine vengeance. His name was erazed from the *dyptics;** and Nicholas I. in one of his letters, compares him to the Neros and Diocleslans, though he was rather misled than sanguinary.

Evils consequent upon heresy.

It is worthy our greatest attention to observe, that the ignorance of princes in religious matters made them guilty of most enormous and fatal errors; but the less surprising, as the bishops were engaged in mutual dissensions. If

* The dyptics were a kind of public registers. There were both profane and sacred. The names of consuls and magistrates were inscribed in the first; in the others those of people of consequence, for whom prayers were to be offered up at the religious ceremonies.

it had not been for these divisions, which distracted mens minds with uncertainty, and kindled a zeal for controversy, they would not have been diverted from the study and exercise of morality, from whence they must have gathered the divine fruits of Christianity in peace. Religion inspires us with a contempt of earthly vanities, a detestation of vice, and indulgence for the frailties of our neighbours; invincible patience in misfortunes, and compassion for the unhappy; in one word, it inspires us with charity and heroic courage. It tends to render every thing perfect, and sanctify every action in common and social life. Wherefore, then, such errors and excesses on religious pretences? Is it because heresy, shooting up under a thousand different forms, incessantly startles the faith by subtilties and sophistry, by which almost the whole energy of mens minds is absorbed in the contest? Disputes engender hatred; from hatred springs every excess; and virtue, exhausted with words and cabals, loses her whole power. Princes and people were seized with a frenzy almost general; the church was torn in pieces; and the state filled with intestine quarrels. This is one of the chief causes of those calamities which are continually presented to our view by history.

JUSTIN.
END OF THE REIGN OF THEODORIC THE GREAT.

518. Justin succeeds to the empire.

JUSTIN, a soldier of fortune, a native of Thrace, and born in the lowest rank of life, who could neither read nor write, but being a zealous Catholic, and sufficiently artful to supplant all his rivals, was elected to succeed Anastasius. The money which he was employed to distribute in the name of another, he bestowed as his own gift. Some factious people having raised a person of obscure birth to the purple, he caused him to be consecrated a bishop. The three nephews of Anastasius were totally neglected.

This reign was wasted in religious disputes; Justin from the first declaring in favour of the orthodox who ruled in Constantinople. The people, with violent outcries, demanded that the memories of the Manicheans should be made infamous, and even their bodies dug up. Anastasius himself was accused of being a Manichean; that a festival should be instituted in honour of the council of Chalcedon, which is still solemnized in the Greek church; that the bishops who were in banishment should be recalled; that the names of some others should be inscribed in the *dyptics*, &c. The patriarch was not permitted to begin the religious ceremonies till the people were obeyed; and such was the influence of the populace on the most

serious matters, that all they had ordained was confirmed by forty bishops.

Justin a zealous Catholic.

Justin commanded that the most perfect submission should be paid to the council of Chalcedon. By a law which he passed, heretics were excluded from holding offices, and even from serving in the army. He reconciled the Greek and Roman churches, which had been separated thirty-four years, that is, from the time that Acacius had been condemned by pope Felix. Pope Hormisdas caused the names of the patriarchs, Euphemius and Macedonius, who were zealous Catholics, to be blotted out of the *dyptics*, because they were reputed unwilling to blacken the character of their predecessor Acacius.

Law against heretics, Jews, &c.

By a new edict, the Manicheans were condemned to be banished; and it declared, that if any of them were afterwards discovered, their heads should be cut off. He likewise confirmed the abovementioned law against heretics in general, in which Pagans, Jews, and Samaritans were included; without once recollecting that their assistance might become necessary. About that time, a Saracen, who was a Christian, said to a prince of his country, who persecuted the Christians, *Consider that we were Christians before we were your subjects. I do not know a power sufficiently strong to compel me to believe what I do not believe, nor to disguise what I do believe; and if we must come to blows, my sword is as long as another.* This bold reply shows to what sovereigns expose themselves by committing acts of violence, which even Constantine prudently avoided.

524. Theodoric complains of the persecutions

Though Justin made an exception in his edict in favour of the Goths, whom he certainly dreaded, Theodoric was provoked at the Arians being refused the same indulgence which he granted to the Catholics. He wrote letters to the emperor, in which he represented in the strongest terms the important truth, that princes have no authority over the *minds* of men; that their privileges do not extend beyond the government in civil matters; and that they have no right to punish any but the disturbers of the public peace. Justin replied, that, without restraining conscience, he might employ whom he thought proper for his service; that an uniform mode of worship was necessary for preserving good order; and therefore he had a right to exclude from the churches all who were of a different persuasion from himself.

He sends pope John to threaten Justin.

Theodoric sent for pope John to Ravenna, and from thence ordered him to proceed to Constantinople, and declare to Justin, that if the Arians were not restored to the possession of their churches and the entire freedom of their religion, reprisals should be made upon the Catholics in Italy. Though the commission was disagreeable to the pope, he seemed to obey. On his arrival at Constantinople, where he was the first Roman pontiff they had seen, he was received with every mark of respect; but he employed his time in attending to the prerogatives of his see; and, so far from restoring their churches to the Arians, consecrated them for the Catholics. At his return he was imprisoned by Theodoric, and, dying in confinement, was honoured as a martyr. According to Fleury's account, he discharged the commission faithful-

ly; 'for, by representing the danger to which Italy was exposed, he procured what he asked from Justin; that is to say, the Arians were to have their liberty.'*

Theodoric, who was sixty-eight years of age, was offended with the murmurs of the Catholics during the negotiation at Constantinople; and, suspecting that plots were forming against him, became jealous and a dupe to calumny. Albinus the patrician was accused of holding a treasonable correspondence with the emperor. Boetius, the philosopher, equally illustrious for his rank and the tenor of his life, having no doubt of the patrician's innocence, openly said, *If Albinus be guilty, I am so, and the whole senate.* The enemies of the philosopher took care to construe the expression into treason. They suborned three witnesses, who gave evidence against him; and, while he was in prison, he composed a pious work, in which Theodoric was sometimes abused. It is entitled, *De Consolatione Philosophiæ.* The conduct of pope John increased the king's suspicions. Boetius, and his father-in-law, Symmachus, were put to death.

Theodoric becomes jealous of the Catholics.

It is not to be doubted that Theodoric thought them guilty; but his heart was wrung with remorse, and, sinking into a deep melancholy, he died at seventy-four years of age, and was succeeded by his grandson Athalaric, the son of his daughter Amalasonta. He was an infant; but his mother, a learned, virtuous, and enlightened princess, capable of business, and equally deserving love and respect, showed her-

526. Death of Theodoric.

* Fleury's Hist. Ecclesiast. l. 32. This account does not seem exact. L'Abrégé Chronol. de Hist. d'Italie.

self not inferior to the task of governing, and, while she held the reins, the people were not sensible of the loss of Theodoric. She was particularly attentive to the education of her son. *It is the love of learning, and of those who cultivate and teach it*, said she, *which distinguishes the civilized from the barbarous nations.*

Cabades solicits Justin to adopt his son Chosroes.

That we might avoid mixing things totally unconnected, we delayed to mention a few important events which occurred during the reign of Justin. Zathius, king of the Lazi, in ancient Colchis, came to get himself crowned at Constantinople, though Cabades, the king of Persia, claimed the right of sovereignty over him, and was upon the point of commencing a war upon that subject, but, changing his intention, he solicited the emperor to adopt his third son, Chosroes, whom he intended for his successor. This extraordinary proposal gave just cause of disquiet, as the people were afraid that a Persian might one day succeed to the empire. He was therefore told, that custom did not admit of foreigners being adopted except by arms, which was a ceremony that did not confer a right of succession. Chosroes was on his way to Constantinople, when the Persians, provoked with this unexpected answer, immediately commenced hostilities, by seizing Iberia, to the east of Lazica, which had been placed by its king under the protection of Justin, who died during these transactions in the year 527.

Justinian declared Augustus.

He had a little before declared Justinian his nephew Augustus, who, after having sworn fraternal affection to Vitalian, assassinated him in the beginning of this reign. The emperor, by his partiality for the blue faction, inspired him

with audacity to insult the laws; to commit the most enormous crimes in open day, and even to sport with assassinations. From these early actions of Justinian, nothing was less to be expected than that he should prove a wise legislator. However, he has been greatly celebrated for his laws, and, if we may use the expression, he would have been deified by the encomiums of enthusiastic civilians, if there had not been frequent instances of weakness, imprudence, injustice and tyranny, visible both in his laws and government. In the sequel, the Roman grandeur will seem to rise from its ruins. We shall see two generals revive it by their victories; but these are only like the last struggles of a dying man, who soon sinks again without life, exhausted by his efforts as by a long decay.

JUSTINIAN.

CHAPTER I.

TILL AFRICA WAS RECONQUERED FROM THE VANDALS.

527. Good and bad qualities of Justinian.

JUSTINIAN was probably of an origin as obscure as his uncle, but had the superior advantage of education. On his accession to the empire he was forty years of age, was well skilled in jurisprudence, fond of study and application, and desirous of reforming abuses; but the slave of prejudice, he was prone to despotism, weak, unsteady, vain, unacquainted with true *glory*, and more eager to dictate to the opinions, than to effect the happiness of his subjects. He was one of those princes whose characters are a strange mixture of good and evil, and who, without being really great, appear so, from the great actions performed by their ministers and generals. The littleness of Justinian's mind, and the faults of his government, will sometimes appear, notwithstanding the splendid success of his enterprises.

His marriage with Theodora.

Would a prince of superior abilities marry an actress, stained with vices, and of a character equally imperious and infamous? Yet this

Justinian did for Theodora, *the most respectable spouse whom God had given him*, as he styles her in one of his laws. Justin had left in the treasury 120,000 pounds weight of gold, which was soon dissipated by the profusion of his successor.

He piqued himself on his skill in theology, which was an additional misfortune to the state. Nor does the zeal he showed in the beginning of his reign for the extirpation of heresy merit commendation, as in his latter days he degenerated from the true faith, and persecuted the orthodox. In him a jealous predilection for his own opinion prevailed over the love of truth. To the laws of his predecessors, he added one which made it capital not to conform to the established doctrines. Pagans, Jews and Heretics, fled from his dominions with curses; others, transported with more violent rage, laid violent hands on themselves; some Montanists in Phrygia set fire to their churches, and consumed themselves in the flames; the Samaritans revolted to the number of fifty thousand, pillaging and massacring wherever they went, till they were massacred themselves. The fruits of these persecutions were the depopulation of the provinces, detestation of the emperor's person, and hatred against Christianity. By confiscating to his own use the property of those who refused to cause themselves and families to be baptized, Justinian gave room to believe that he had his own interest as much at heart as the propagation of the Christian faith. The Goths alone, for Theodoric was not yet forgotten, were exempted from the rigour of those laws. The

Violent zeal of Justinian.

emperor even rebuilt a church for the Arians; but the first time that they assembled in it, they were attacked, and the greatest part of them murdered by a troop of fanatics, who were but too much encouraged by the emperor's conduct.

Severe laws for the reformation of manners.

At the same time, his severity was exercised against transgressions of the rules of morality, but in a manner less proper to work a reformation than to raise scandal. Two bishops, several priests and senators, being convicted of monstrous debaucheries, were mutilated in the public square. This example proving ineffectual, the emperor long after, in 554, by a law published in Lent, threatened with the most rigorous punishment all who were guilty, unless they did penance at Easter; but how could he reckon upon such penance? He punished blasphemy as severely as the crime against nature, and prohibited games of chance as a temptation to blasphemy. He banished those who made a trade of prostitution, and declared it capital in future. A prudent legislator would first have considered whether all these laws were practicable; if they were capable of reforming the manners of a corrupted nation; if the remedies applied were suited to the disorders; and would have dreaded doing mischief while he was endeavouring to do good. In fact, the disorders grew still more flagrant and numerous.

War with Persia. Belisarius defeated at Callinicum.

Mean time, the war with Persia giving the emperor no small uneasiness, though the Romans had gained some advantages over the enemy, he sent ambassadors to Cabades with presents and proposals for an accommodation;

but received in return a haughty letter, in which that monarch styled himself *King of Kings, Son of the Sun, Sovereign of the East;* while he gave Justinian only those of *Son of the Moon, and Sovereign of the West.* In 530, Belisarius, already distinguished by his abilities and courage, defeated the Persians near Dara. But the following year he lost the battle of Callinicum on Easter-eve. As the troops had been weakened by the fast, and he had it in his power to repulse the enemy without running any risk, he was desirous of avoiding an engagement; but was obliged to give way to the rash ardour of his soldiers, who exclaimed against his prudent caution as want of courage, and were ready to break out into open mutiny. Thus the Persians had the glory of vanquishing an army much superior to their own, and commanded by the best general of the empire. Belisarius was recalled; and being too virtuous to play the mean flatterer, was destined more than once to feel, by experience, that great services and triumphs are the ready way to disgrace in a court governed by intrigue.

531. Chosroes succeeds Cabades.

The Roman arms being successful in Armenia and other parts, Cabades died through grief for his losses; but his successor Chosroes was very capable of repairing them. This prince, who is maliciously decried by the Greeks, but extolled by the Orientals above Cyrus himself, soon gave proofs of his heroic sentiments; and Justinian having renewed the negotiations, he declared that he would not lay down his arms, except upon condition of receiving eleven thousand pounds weight of gold, with certain

fortresses, and that the commander of the troops in Mesopotamia, instead of residing in that province, should remain at Constantinople. The emperor, after agreeing to every thing, retracted and sent a counter-order; but was in the end obliged, in 533, to conclude a treaty on the most humiliating terms.

532. Rebellion of the green faction.

Through his whole reign, he was so imprudent as to foment the factions of the circus by siding with the blue in opposition to the green, which was favoured by the empress Theodora. These two had absorbed all the other factions, and divided the whole city of Constantinople; and their quarrels, which were constantly attended with bloodshed, at last produced one of the most dreadful seditions that had ever been known. One day during the Circensian games, the green faction, irritated against the emperor, offered him the grossest insults; and the rage of the populace was inflamed by the execution of their ringleaders. The mutineers demanded four odious ministers to be given up to them; and, among the rest, Tribonian, who made a sale of justice, and was afterwards the instrument of legislation. Justinian removed those ministers, and, finding that this compliance did not disarm the unbridled multitude, he was preparing to escape their rage by flight, but was prevented by the more courageous Theodora. *It is not necessary you should live*, said she; *but it is absolutely necessary not to survive your honour. A sovereign lingering out a shameful existence in exile, is more worthless than a dead carcass. The most glorious sepulchre is a throne.* This woman who

is so much decried, if we may believe some historians, possessed true elevation of soul.

A report being circulated that the emperor and his wife were fled, the populace hastened to the house of Hypatius, the nephew of Anastasius, and, forcing him along with them, proclaimed him Augustus, when Justinian suddenly appeared with the book of the gospels in his hand, acknowledged himself guilty, declared that this calamity had been caused by his own sins, and that he pardoned the offence, at the same time offering indemnity to all, without exception, if they would return to their duty. But their hatred was now heightened by contempt, and he was obliged to shelter himself from violence by a speedy retreat into his palace. Singular humiliation of the emperor.

All hope was lost, had not Belisarius, followed by the principal officers with their soldiers, briskly charged the mutineers. The massacre was dreadful. Thirty thousand men lost their lives; and the horrors of the day were completed by a conflagration. Hypatius and his brother Pompey were strangled in prison; and the emperor caused the news of his victory to be published in every quarter of the empire. What a deplorable subject of vanity! Belisarius quells the mutineers.

CHAPTER II.

CONQUEST OF AFRICA BY BELISARIUS.

Though Justinian made the follies of the circus a matter of serious attention, and escaped falling their victim only by the massacre of his The Vandals enervated in Africa.

subjects, yet, because chance had placed some great men about him, very important enterprises were begun and executed in his reign. The conquest of Africa was the work of Belisarius. From the time of Genseric, the Vandals had totally degenerated. They were no more those intrepid heroes, indefatigable, sober, and chaste, who, issuing from the north, crushed all opposition; but a nation, enervated in a rich and burning climate, where luxury and riches spread every allurement of debauchery.

Errors committed by Genseric.

Two faults committed by Genseric had exposed them to a revolution the moment that their manners degenerated. He had dismantled all the strong places except Carthage, that, in case of a war, the Romans might not find means to secure a footing in the country. He had made it a law that the crown should always devolve to the eldest of his family, without regard to the primogeniture of the branches; which was opening a way for confusion and the most horrid crimes. Accordingly, his vast dominions, which comprehended Corsica and Sardinia, with all the countries from the streights of Gades to Cyrenaica, were, after his death, a theatre of divisions and discord.

Gelimer the usurper.

Huneric, who succeeded him, massacred his own brothers and nephews, in order to secure the crown to his son, Hilderic, who mounted the throne after him, but was deposed by Gelimer, great grandson of the conqueror. Justinian, who had been in alliance with Hilderic, wrote in his favour to Gelimer; but his advices and threats were treated with contempt. Upon this the emperor hastened the conclu-

sion of the treaty with Persia, and resolved to carry the war into Africa, the conduct of which was committed to Belisarius.

This illustrious general embarked in the month of June, at the head of an army which consisted only of ten thousand foot, and six thousand horse; and landed in Africa in the third month after his departure. The exact discipline which he maintained in his army made him be looked upon rather as a deliverer than enemy. He therefore advanced near Carthage, without meeting almost any resistance. At last he encountered Gelimer, whom he totally routed, and next day marched up to the gates of the city, the streets of which were illuminated for his reception; but being apprehensive that the licentiousness of his troops would be favoured by the darkness, he encamped without the walls; and the day following, made his entry as if into a city of the empire, without tumult, violence, or even an interruption of commerce. Carthage had been under the dominion of the Vandals fourscore and fifteen years.

533. Conquest of Africa by Belisarius.

Gelimer had sent into Spain to request assistance from Theudis, king of the Visigoths; and his ambassadors, who knew nothing of what had passed, confidently affirmed that he was on the point of crushing the Romans, who were only a handful of banditti. But Theudis, who was better informed, bid them return to Carthage, and examine into the state of affairs. Being dismissed with this answer, they arrived in the harbour of that city, where they had not the least suspicion of meeting with enemies, and were conducted to Belisarius, who

Gelimer sends ambassadors into Spain.

suffered them to depart on their revealing the secret of their commission.

All his efforts unsuccessful.

Mean time, the Vandal monarch collected a new army, while his emissaries attempted to corrupt the Huns in the Roman service, who, discontented with the strictness of the discipline, and apprehensive of being detained in Africa, promised to revolt upon the first opportunity; but the general having discovered the plot, regained the affection of those barbarians by loading them with caresses, and distributing among them a quantity of wine, when they acknowledged their treachery, and promised to make amends for it by their future behaviour. At Tricamara he defeated an army of ten times his own number, for it consisted of a hundred thousand men; and Gelimer fled to an inaccessible mountain in the remotest part of Numidia, where, reduced to a savage life, for the country produced only barley and rye, which the Moors had neither skill to grind nor bake, after suffering the severest hardships for three months, he found himself obliged to surrender. Belisarius received him at Carthage, where he caused him to be detained till the pleasure of Justinian was known.

534. Belisarius imprudently suspected.

Had the emperor's conduct been guided by prudence, he would have perceived that it was absolutely necessary the great man, who in three months had annihilated the power of the Vandals, should be continued in his command in order to secure his conquest. But at Constantinople envy had wakeful eyes. Even some of the hero's officers suffered themselves to be made tools of the malice of the courtiers, and he was accused of a design to revolt. Being

informed of this charge, and Justinian having left it to his choice, either to stay in Africa or return, he immediately set out in order to refute the calumny.

A triumph was decreed him, an honour which till then had never been granted in the East, and Gelimer followed his chariot at the head of the prisoners; that unhappy prince often repeating those words so well adapted to his misfortunes, *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!* After the triumph, Justinian assigned him some lands in Galatia, where he passed the remainder of his days. A triumph decreed him.

The moment that Belisarius embarked, the Moors raised an insurrection; and tranquillity was not restored by his successors till after a war of fourteen years. Africa, the number of whose inhabitants was prodigiously diminished, remained subject to the empire till the invasion of the Saracens, that is about a hundred years, and even the name of the Vandals was for ever obliterated in that country. It was divided by Justinian into seven provinces, Tingitana, Mauritania, Numidia, the province of Carthage, Byzacene, Tripolitana, and Sardinia, that island having made part of the Vandal territories. He treated the Arians in his new dominions as he every where treated the heretics; and though, at first, he affected a mild government, the people were soon ruined by the collectors of the revenue. Maladministration of Africa.

Chosroes sent him an embassy of congratulation, or rather to brave him, by demanding a share of the booty; 'For,' said he, 'had it not been for the peace with the Persians, the Romans would not have been able to conquer Chosroes braves the emperor.

the Vandals;' and magnificent presents were sent him in order to prevent a rupture.

Pomp and profusion of Theodora.

The riches of which Genseric had plundered Rome would have been of great use to the emperor, had he employed them for the public benefit. But the expenses of Theodora alone swallowed up immense treasures. In her journey to the baths of Bithynia, she was attended by a train of four thousand men. She was lavish in her donations to churches and monasteries, while she insulted religion by her crimes: nor was her husband's piety much more rational. Let us here, in general, observe an important truth, the proofs of which occur every moment. That true piety which enlightens and elevates the soul necessarily produces effects equally beneficial and noble; but, on the contrary, superstition, when substituted in its place, debases, tortures, or depraves human nature. Its yoke is heavy, and sometimes drags blind but innocent victims to the grave; the perverse it hardens, by teaching them that the want of virtue may be compensated by outward observances; or, at least, it places the greatest merit in what is of no estimation when put in the balance with the duties of life.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST EXPEDITION OF BELISARIUS INTO ITALY.

It is a kind of prodigy to see important enterprises executed under a weak government; but so favourable were the conjunctures, that the conquest of Africa was quickly followed by that of Italy. Amalasontha, mother of Athalaric, who, under the title of queen, which she assumed during her regency, governed his dominions with admirable prudence, had the mortification of seeing that young prince hurried into vice by the arts of his courtiers; and they even formed a design to deprive her of the royalty, of which she made too good an use not to draw upon her their hatred. But she broke their design, and put to death the chiefs of the cabal, after having received the assurance of Justinian, that, in case of necessity, she should find an asylum at Constantinople.

Cabals against Amalasontha in Italy.

This princess had a more dangerous enemy in Theodatus, nephew of her father Theodoric, and governor of Tuscany, whose extortions she had restrained and punished. Transported with rage at this imagined injury, he privately engaged to put Tuscany into the hands of the emperor, on condition of receiving a sum of money, and the dignity of senator in Constantinople. In the mean time Athalaric died, exhausted by his debaucheries; and Amalasontha,

She is put to death by Theodatus.

flattering herself that Theodatus, the only survivor of the royal family, might be attached to her by motives of gratitude, procured him the crown, though she still kept the authority in her own hands. He readily took an oath to comply in every thing with her pleasure; but soon after shut her up in a fortress, where she was strangled. Cassiodorus, who continued in office under this prince, speaks of him with admiration. Perhaps that old minister, being naturally of a declamatory turn, was charmed with his affectation of Platonism, and a few acts of seeming justice. After all, is it surprising that a writer, in other respects estimable, should, after long residence at court, sometimes assume the tone of a flatterer?

535. Enterprise of Justinian against Italy.

Justinian eagerly embraced the pretence furnished him by the death of Amalasontha for executing his designs upon Italy. Belisarius seized upon Sicily, while Mondonus, another general of distinction, invaded Dalmatia, and made himself master of Salone; upon which the timid Theodatus offered to abdicate the kingdom, on condition of receiving lands to the value of twelve hundred pounds weight of gold yearly rent, and even sent pope Agapetus II. to Constantinople in order to solicit a peace. But Mondonus having been overpowered by numbers, and slain, he retracted his engagements, and hastened his ruin.

536. Belisarius master of Rome.

Belisarius took Naples by storm, after a bloody siege of twenty days; and the Goths, filled with indignation against their king for not marching to its relief, proclaimed Vitiges, an officer of tried valour. Theodatus endeavoured to escape by flight, but was overtaken

and murdered; and Vitiges having received the oath of allegiance from pope Silverius, the senate and the people of Rome set out for Ravenna to assemble an army. In a short time Belisarius presented himself at the gates of Rome; and the inhabitants, by advice of the pope, who exhorted them not to expose themselves imprudently to danger, surrendered without standing an attack. Thus was Rome restored to the empire, threescore years after it had been lost.

537. He supports a memorable siege.

With five thousand men Belisarius undertook to defend that immense city against an army of more than a hundred thousand Ostrogoths. He trusted to the valour and discipline of his troops. He had gained all his victories with small armies; and besides, the enemy being acquainted only with field service, in their sieges probably employed Italian engineers, who certainly were far from being zealous in their cause. This siege, which is one of the most remarkable in history, lasted a year and nine days. Procopius has given an interesting account of it, with some particulars which have a tincture of the marvellous. Vitiges having secured Porto, at the mouth of the Tiber, which was unprovided with a garrison, the besieged were extremely pressed for want of provisions: but an infectious distemper having broken out in the camp of the besiegers, and Belisarius having received some reinforcements, a truce was agreed upon for three months, which, however, was kept by neither party; and at last Vitiges, dreading that he should lose Ravenna by treachery, raised the siege.

Singular instance of devotion.

We shall here mention a circumstance expressive of the manners and opinions of the age. Belisarius, designing to repair a breach in the walls opposite to St Peter's church, was prevented by the Romans, who assured him that St Peter had promised to defend it. The Ostrogoths, who, notwithstanding their Arianism, had fervent sentiments of piety, made no attack upon that quarter; and the miracle appeared so unquestionable, that it was long made a point of religion not to rebuild the wall.

Religious intolerance of Justinian.

While the generals were employed in making vast conquests, the emperor's vanity, rather than his zeal, was employed in religious matters. He wrote several books of theology; he decided as dogmatically as a doctor of the church; and his absolute power gave weight to his determinations. *Be of my opinion*, said he one day to pope Agapetus, *or I will banish you to the extremities of the empire.* The greatest part of the bishops conformed the more readily to his sentiments, as he increased their authority over the people.

He grants the bishops a court.

It was he who first established a bishop's court, as is observed by Mr Le Beau; but he gave it no compulsory power. By his regulation, in all civil causes, clerks and monks were in the first instance, to be summoned before the bishop; in criminal, either before the bishop or a secular judge. The sentence of a secular judge against a clerk could not be executed without leave of the bishop. In case of refusal, the matter was to be laid before the prince. Bishops and nuns were in no case amenable before secular courts.

Had he not exhausted the treasury in building the stately church of St Sophia, that edifice would have been a more glorious monument to his memory. When it was consecrated, joining his own praises to those of the Deity, he exclaimed, *Solomon, I have outdone thee!* The cupola was new covered with long slabs of marble without wood work, in order to prevent fires. This church had been burned during the sedition in 532. The sanctuary was plated with silver, the weight of which is said to have amounted to forty thousand pounds. The altar, which shone with jewels, was supported by four pillars of massy gold. Such immense treasures were destined one day to become a prey to the Turks, and that stately cathedral to be converted into a mosque. Justinian had fixed the number of clerks in the cathedral of St Sophia to four hundred and eighty-five, besides forty deaconesses; but they were afterwards increased to eight hundred. What enormous sums must their maintenance have cost!

Church of St Sophia.

As it is inconsistent with our plan to enter into the particulars of a war, we shall rapidly follow Belisarius to the conclusion of his expedition into Italy, where he at last laid siege to Ravenna, into which Vitiges had thrown himself with the remains of his forces. The Franks offered that prince an army of five hundred thousand men, on condition of his ceding to them part of his dominions; but as he had found them treacherous on another occasion, he chose rather to treat with the Romans. The emperor consented that Vitiges should keep the whole territory beyond the Po; but

539. Belisarius besieges Ravenna.

Belisarius being already master of that country, and on the point of reducing all Italy to his obedience, refused to sign the treaty.

He refuses royalty.

In the mean time a fire broke out in the magazines of Ravenna; and the Goths, apprehensive of perishing by famine, privately made an offer of the crown to Belisarius; such was the admiration with which he had inspired them. But he replied, I am a subject of the emperor, and cannot accept such an offer without his consent. Vitiges being informed of this step taken by the Goths, offered to abdicate in his favour; and that great general seized the opportunity of putting an end to the war. Without explaining himself any further, he promised the enemy entire security for their lives and properties; and it being concluded that he would certainly accept the crown, he was received into the city. At last his secret views were discovered. He kept his word, and treated the Goths with the same kindness as the Romans; but, by an unjustifiable policy, secured the person of the king, and sent him to Constantinople, to which he himself was recalled by the emperor from motives of jealousy, excited by the malignity of the courtiers, though under pretence of giving him the command of the army against Chosroes, who was preparing to commence hostilities. Vitiges was made a patrician.

Magnanimity of the Roman general.

Nothing could have been more easy for Belisarius than to make himself king of Italy, Ildibald, whom the Ostrogoths invested with that dignity, for they preserved Pavia and Verona, again solicited him to accept it; but he refused it anew, being incapable of betraying,

even for a kingdom, a prince ever open to suspicion, and whose ingratitude he had reason to dread. In him every thing was heroic; his magnanimity, his virtues, even exceeded his military talents. A nation would have been happy in having him for a master, since even those enemies who had so frequently been vanquished by his arms were desirous of living under his government. The peasants were secure in their fields, while he made monarchs tremble. *An army*, said he, *ought to protect, not to ravage, the country*. In an age of meanness and corruption, he seemed to revive the heroes of ancient Rome.

Intrigues against him.

But worthless intriguers had more credit at court; and the better service he did the state the more inveterate were they against him. We shall see them one day triumph over this great man. Such is often the unhappiness of princes, who, by the insidious arts of some jealous and craving miscreants round them, whom they imagine attached to their person, while their fortune only is the object, are blinded to merit, and rendered suspicious even of virtue. But did not the services of Belisarius speak for him? Had not his fidelity undergone sufficiently numerous and distinguished trials? And had Justinian been endowed with a great soul and a just understanding, could he not have discerned between the arts of intrigue and the noble conduct of heroic zeal? We shall always find him employing Belisarius in cases of necessity; always trusting him, and always recompensing his services with disgrace.

CHAPTER IV.

WAR WITH PERSIA. THE EMPIRE OF THE GOTHS REESTABLISHED IN ITALY BY TOTILA.

Weakness of the empire.

JUSTINIAN repaired or built a vast number of cities and fortresses, by which he exhausted the revenue without augmenting the real strength of his empire; as no fortifications could supply the want of discipline, courage, and public spirit. When the armies ceased to be commanded by generals of uncommon abilities, every thing felt symptons of decay. After the departure of Belisarius, the Goths, as we shall see elsewhere, again grew formidable, while Chosroes spread terror through the East.

540. Chosroes invades Syria.

That warlike prince, who was filled with uneasiness at the success of Justinian's arms, notwithstanding that emperor's earnest desire to keep upon good terms with him, renewed the war; and, having invaded Syria, and taken without resistance the strong cities of Hierapolis and Beræa, now Aleppo, laid siege to Antioch, the rival of Rome and Constantinople, which he entered by escalade, and reduced to ashes, after abandoning it to be pillaged by his army, because the inhabitants had insulted him from their walls.

The Romans made tributaries.

Justinian having sent ambassadors with new proposals of peace, who began with representing to him the injustice of that war which had been undertaken in violation of the treaties, he

replied, that the emperor had been the first aggressor, and proved it by letters written to the barbarians, to stir them up against the Persians, concluding with requiring so much money down, and a certain sum annually. Upon this the ambassadors exclaiming, *What! Shall the Romans be tributary to the Persians? No,* replied Chosroes, *you shall pay us a subsidy as you do to the Huns and Saracens, for the defence of your frontiers.* And, at last, it was stipulated that he should immediately be paid five thousand pounds weight of gold, besides five hundred every year.

Persians are victorious after the recal of Belisarius.

Scarce was the treaty concluded, when it was violated by both parties. Belisarius being sent against the Persians, and Chosroes, before he was attacked, having taken the strong city of Petra, and deprived the Romans of the whole territory of Lazica, the inhabitants of which, oppressed by the avarice of a Roman governor, had invited him to deliver them from tyranny, and receive them as his subjects. Some time after, the king of Persia attempting to invade Palestine, Belisarius, though he had almost no troops, by a stratagem, made him believe that he was opposed by a powerful army, which so intimidated him, that he repassed the Euphrates. But that general was recalled for the war in Italy; and his successor Martinus, at the head of thirty thousand men, was put to flight by four thousand Persians. Thus, where Belisarius did not command, the empire met with nothing but loss and disgraces.

Italy oppressed by the Romans.

Italy was on the point of being dismembered from the empire. The generals thought more of pillaging than defending it. A logo-

theros, or superintendant of the finances, whom Justinian had sent in quality of governor, having disgusted the people and the army by all the oppressions of a knavish and unfeeling tax-gatherer, Ildibald, king of the Ostrogoths, whose whole force consisted at first only of a thousand men, soon formed a numerous army, and made himself master of all the country on the north of the Po; but being guilty of some acts of injustice, was assassinated, as was his successor Evaric, who was deemed unworthy of the throne.

Totila revives the hopes of the Goths.

The hopes of the nation were revived by Totila, nephew of Ildibald, a prince comparable to Theodoric, who was proclaimed in 541. He defeated the Romans at Faenza, and afterwards at Marcello, near Florence; upon which occasions he treated the prisoners with such humanity, that they became his faithful subjects. His success filled even Rome and Ravenna with alarms; and Lucania, Apulia, Calabria, and even Naples, were soon in his power. The Italian troops not receiving their pay, subsisted by rapine, and disregarded the orders of their generals, while those of Totila observed exact discipline. That hero, so mild to the conquered, could never be prevailed upon to pardon a soldier who had ravished the daughter of a Roman, though one of the bravest men in the army. *That any of my subjects should be unhappy*, said he, *fills me with the most heart-piercing sorrow; but I myself should be the author of their greatest calamities, did I leave crimes unpunished.* Such ought to have been the sentiments and practice of the emperors.

While affairs were in this unprosperous situation, the generals informed Justinian that Italy would be lost, if succours were not very speedily sent; upon which Belisarius was despatched for that country, but with so few troops, that the brave general was obliged to shut himself up in Ravenna. In the mean time, Rome was besieged by Totila, and the Goths having made themselves masters of a fleet, loaded with provisions from Sicily, the inhabitants were reduced by famine to despair; while two rapacious commanders, far from endeavouring to relieve their misery, took a cruel advantage of it, by selling at an excessive price the corn which they concealed in subterraneous vaults. A bushel of wheat was sold for seven *aurei*, about 5*l.* 12s. 10½d. In vain did Belisarius, who had received some reinforcements, attempt to throw a convoy into Rome. His orders were badly executed; and it fell into the hands of the enemy, before it reached the city.

544. Justinian sends Belisarius into Italy.

Some Isaurian deserters having found means to make the Gothic monarch master of one of the gates, he entered the place, and the garrison fled. Upon which he gave strict orders to spare the inhabitants, which were so well observed, that except twenty-six soldiers, and threescore other persons, who were put to the sword before the orders were given out, not a life was lost. Totila then sent for the senators, and reproached them with their treachery to a nation from which they had received so many obligations; contrasting the gentle government of Theodoric and Amalasontha, with their late oppressions.

546. Totila takes Rome, and spares the Romans.

His just reproaches.

You have received the proper reward of your treachery and ingratitude, said he to them. *A new master has crushed you under a load of taxes, notwithstanding the horrors of war; and the collectors of his revenue have done you more mischief than the enemy.* No reply could be made to this reproof; yet we shall find the Romans again desirous to change their masters, and again having reason to repent of it. Such is the blindness of nations.

Belisarius re-enters and defends Rome.

Totila had resolved to destroy Rome, which he could not keep, as he had occasion for his troops elsewhere; but was diverted from that design by Belisarius, who represented to him by letter, that he would sully his renown by destroying the most magnificent city in the world. *Men immortalize themselves, and serve society by building cities*, said the general in his letter, *but, by destroying them, declare themselves enemies of their species, and incur eternal disgrace.* The king thanked him for his advice, promised to profit by it, and quitted Rome after dispersing its inhabitants. Soon after, Belisarius took possession of it; and being attacked by the Goths, though the walls were in very bad repair, had the glory of defending it against Totila, all whose attacks he repulsed; but that prince defeated other generals, and took other places, particulary Perusia, which held out seven months.

548. He returns to Constantinople.

Belisarius had quitted Italy, after having been five years left without assistance, a witness of the enemy's success, and in no condition to maintain his former reputation. Justinian ruined the empire by useless buildings, and thought he did a great deal when he grant-

ed the general a handful of men. Bad officers and troops without pay or provisions, were opposed to a young, intrepid, prudent, active monarch, adored by his soldiers and subjects, and whose forces increased with his victories. Had not Belisarius obtained leave to return to Constantinople, he ran the risk of being in a short time crushed by Totila. He carried with him great sums, which he had raised by contribution in Italy; a stain of which it is impossible to clear his memory, unless we suppose, against all probability, that considering the extreme want in which he was left by Justinian, he thought himself obliged to accumulate money by every method, for the service of the prince.

Justinian and Totila court the Franks.

Twelve years before, the Goths had ceded to the Franks their possessions in Gaul, which extended from the Alps to the Rhone, and from the Mediterranean to the kingdom of the Burgundians; and Justinian, desirous of attaching to himself that nation, which was already very powerful, under pretence that those provinces of right belonged to him, confirmed, by an authentic act, the cession made to the Franks. On the other hand, Totila, no less solicitous of bringing them over to his interest, demanded in marriage the daughter of Theodebert, king of Austrasia. But that prince replied, *That his daughter ought to have a king for her husband, and that Totila was not king of Italy, because he could not keep Rome.*

Theodebert in Italy.

Theodebert having made himself master of the Alps, extended his conquests into Liguria and Venetia; but, incensed at the emperor for assuming the title of *Conqueror of the Franks*

and Alemains, made a treaty of partition with the Gothic monarch, and designed in person to carry the war into the East, when he was cut off in the middle of his enterprises by an untimely death.

549. Rome again taken by the Goths.

At last Totila, taking to heart the reproach of Theodebert, retook Rome, which he rebuilt, and new peopled; and afterwards invaded *Sicily*, from whence he returned with a rich booty. In the mean time, Thrace was threatened by the Lombards, who were settled in Pannonia and Noricum; the Gepidæ, from Sirmium and Dacia; the Heruli, established in Mæsia, and, above all, by the Sclavonians, who became formidable soon after the beginning of this reign. This numerous and fierce nation originally settled in the northern parts of Sarmatia, afterwards spread themselves along the borders of the Palus Mæotis and the Vistula, and, following the steps of the Vandals, had fixed their habitations between that river and the Niester. The Antes, one of their most distinguished tribes, who have been confounded *with the* Bulgarians, or with the Abares, had settled near the Danube.

The Sclavonians the most formidable.

Those Sclavonians were men of great stature, robust, and indefatigable, who inhabited detached cottages. They despised agriculture, and were solely employed in war; extremely jealous of their liberty, and generously hospitable, notwithstanding the fierceness of their disposition. Their first incursion into Thrace and Illyria was dreadful; and though their numbers were at that time very small, they struck so much terror, and committed such horrid ravages and cruelties, that Justinian

sent his nephew Germanus to oppose them. Awed by the reputation of that general, they retired; but Germanus, who was to have succeeded Belisarius in Italy, and whose virtues had resisted the corruption of the court, dying suddenly, they repassed the Danube, defeated several generals, and advanced within a day's march of Constantinople; and though again obliged to retreat, yet this check only increased their fury.

551. Justinian purchases a truce with Chosroes.

To complete the misfortunes of the empire, the war with the Persians, which had been suspended by a truce of four years, was kindled anew in Lazica; and the Romans, who at first were victorious, losing their advantages, Justinian again purchased a truce, the conditions of which were dictated by Chosroes. Instead of annual payments, the emperor at once discharged the whole sum that was demanded for five years, to avoid the appearance of being subjected to a tribute; a piece of childish vanity, worthy of that prince's narrow genius. However, two monks made amends for this loss, by bringing to Constantinople some silk worms' eggs, with the secret of turning them to advantage. The price of silk was then excessive, and the Persians enriched themselves by that trade.

Complaints against the emperor.

The emperor's artifices were far from blinding the eyes of the public. The sums which he paid to the enemies of the Roman name were looked upon as a disgraceful tribute; and the people loudly complained, that, in the space of eleven years and a half, he had payed to Chosroes four thousand six hundred pounds weight of gold, which were equivalent to an

annual tribute of four hundred. In one word, he was charged with meanly purchasing peace while the war was not discontinued.

He rejects the offers of Totila.

His behaviour to the Goths was as intractable as his conduct to the Persians was mean. Totila several times sued for peace, and was as often refused; though that hero offered, in the name of his nation, to pay a tribute, to renounce all pretensions to Sicily and *Dalmatia*, and to serve the emperor in all his wars; at the same time representing, that part of Italy belonged to the Franks, while the Goths contented themselves with the remains of a country which was reduced to an entire desert. In all probability he would have made Justinian repent his haughty refusals, had not Narses been sent against him at the head of a strong army.

CHAPTER V.

NARSES WRESTS ITALY FROM THE GOTHS. AFFAIR OF THE THREE CHAPTERS.

Narses sent into Italy.

NARSES, great chamberlain and favourite of the emperor, was an eunuch, and unquestionably a perfect master in the mystery of court intrigues, as he had raised himself from a state of slavery to the summit of power; yet his merit and abilities were still superior to his fortune. The choice of such a commander can only be attributed to the influence of favour, for he was unacquainted with war; and, thir-

teen years before, when he marched into Italy to reinforce Belisarius, had, from an unpardonable pique, crossed that general's operations.

However, his nomination brought success. Narses affected unwillingness, that he might obtain all the supplies which he wanted. The treasury was thrown open to him, and he levied one of the strongest armies which the empire had for a long time set on foot. His show of devotion, joined to uncommon sagacity, a great share of courage and prudence, and boundless generosity, contributed to the success of his enterprises. The soldiers thought him inspired, and believed themselves invincible under his command.

The methods he took to ensure success.

The Franks, who were masters of Treviso, Vicenza, and Padua, having refused him a passage, he took the road to Ravenna, passed near Rimini, without losing time in laying siege to it, and directed his course towards Rome. Totila advancing against him, they came to an engagement in the plain of Lentagio, in the dutchy of Urbino, where the Goths were routed; and their king, after fruitlessly endeavouring to rally them, received a mortal wound from a lance, of which he died at Capra. A body of Lombards in the army of Narses did him good service upon this occasion. But it was not then imagined that their nation would soon reign in Italy. The conqueror, after making himself master of Rome, laid siege to Cumæ, the strongest town in the whole country.

552. He defeats Totila, who dies of his wounds.

The Goths had elected for their king Theia, a brave officer, who, though not possessed of the humanity of Totila, was worthy to succeed him

553. Siege of Cumæ.

in the management of the war. Being resolved to preserve Cumæ, he advanced as far as Mount Vesuvius, where a second battle was fought, and the two armies performed prodigies of valour. Theia, who exposed himself in the thickest of the fight, had several times changed his buckler, and, attempting to do so once more, that which he had being loaded with twelve javelins, he was run through the moment that he laid open his breast; notwithstanding which, the Goths continued the battle with equal fury; but at last, being exhausted, offered to lay down their arms, on condition of being permitted to leave Italy with their effects, suffered to live according to their own laws, and treated as allies of the empire; to which Narses consented, in order that he might not drive them to despair.

All Italy conquered.

Cumæ, defended by Aligern, the brother of Totila, still held out against so formidable an enemy; and though the Romans threw down some of the towers and a gate, by help of a mine which they dug through the grotto of the Sybil, they could not make their way into the city. Narses therefore decamped, in order to make a conquest of Tuscany. Lucca submitted, after a long siege. At last Aligern voluntarily surrendered the keys of Cumæ, choosing rather to submit to the Romans than to the Franks and Alemains, an army of whom threatened Italy under pretence of coming to his assistance. Their leaders, Beuclinus and Leutharis, were defeated, and seven thousand Goths, who had assembled in Compsa, now Conza, being forced to surrender in 554, Narses com-

pleted the conquest of Italy, which he governed thirteen years.

Thus fell the monarchy founded by Theodoric, and revived by Totila, two princes who may be compared with the greatest men the world has produced. The Gothic nation, which Procopius affects to hold in such contempt, merits the praise and regret of every man who is not blindly wedded to prejudice. But these Ostrogoths, so just and humane, who treated the Catholics as their brethren, were held in detestation, because they were Arians. The Italians, though happy under their dominion, formed a notion that it was disgraceful for Catholics to be subject to heretics; and, traitors to an equitable government, made themselves miserable by a change of masters. The Italians hated the Ostrogoths.

Justinian, in the midst of the great affairs of the empire, still dogmatized, and desired that his opinions should be adopted as rules of faith. Several years before, he had published an edict against the *Three Chapters*, the name given to the theological works of three authors; the first of whom, Theodorus of Mopsuestia, died in the communion of the church; and the two others, Theodoret and Ibas, had been admitted to the council of Chalcedon. But the emperor anathematized their writings; and all were obliged to subscribe to his edict, under pain of disgrace. Pope Vigilius, whom he invited to Constantinople, at first refused to sign it, but afterwards consented; upon which some western bishops having excommunicated the pope, he was put in prison; from whence making his escape, he, in his turn, excommunicated the adversaries of the *Three* Affair of the Three chapters.

Chapters. A council was assembled at Constantinople, which, being entirely composed of Eastern bishops, condemned what the emperor had condemned. Though the West refused to admit this decision, Vigilius at last received it; but, for more than a hundred and fifty years, it was rejected by a multitude of bishops, especially those of Istria and Venetia, who formed the schism of Aquileia; however, in process of time, the universal church has ranked those of Constantinople among the œcumenical councils. We shall find the East, till the dissolution of the empire, continually disturbed by the same spirit of controversy, which, in its influence, is so pernicious to the business of the state and the order of society. The West, under the dominion of the barbarians, was only shaken by war. It may be questioned, whether their ignorance was not preferable to the remains of science, on which the Orientals so much prided themselves.

CHAPTER VI.

END OF THE REIGN OF JUSTINIAN.

Bad management of the government.

A LONG pestilence, dreadful earthquakes, continual wars, the barbarians constantly in arms and carrying on their enterprises, the people always oppressed and unhappy—such is the picture of Justinian's reign, notwithstanding the success of his generals. He imagined that he could secure the empire from invasion by

buying off its enemies; but the money which he meanly lavished for this purpose, only served to increase their avarice and insolence. Before him, the standing army amounted to six hundred and forty-five thousand, but he had reduced them to one hundred and fifty thousand, dispersed in all quarters of the empire; a reform which, though it would have been laudable in other circumstances, yet was then a real evil, as the troops were insufficient to make head against so many enemies; and even these were not furnished with proper subsistence, the sums destined for their support being embezzled by the receivers, and converted into food for their luxury. The consequence of all this was, that the service was abandoned at the very time when it became most necessary. The emperor flattered himself with propitiating, by a relentless zeal, the Divine vengeance, to which he attributed so many misfortunes. Blasphemers and pagans were put to death; but religion gained little by these sacrifices; and the discontents still increased.

Incursions of the Abares, Turks, and Huns.

Two nations, till then unknown, the Abares and Turks, had advanced from Tartary to the frontiers of the empire, from whence they sent ambassadors, with an offer of alliance, that is, with demands of a subsidy; and Justinian did not fail to let them see, as had been so often done before, that they could gain more by attacking the Romans. The following year, 559, Thrace was overrun by an army of Huns, who, passing the long wall, which in some places had been thrown down by earthquakes, and was every where unguarded, made incursions to the very gates of Constantinople, and struck an

universal panic even in the heart of the imperial palace.

Belisarius again employed and recalled.

Belisarius, who had passed ten years unnoticed at the court, then seemed his country's sole refuge; and being intrusted with the command, defeated the barbarians, though almost without an army. But envy awoke; he was immediately recalled, and the Huns renewed their invasion. The emperor, according to custom, bought them off, and by this roused the jealousy of other tribes, who, dreading to lose their subsidies, which had been long paid them, fell furiously upon the new comers; and these barbarians destroyed one another with such merciless and obstinate rage, that not only their power, but their very name, was extinguished.

562. Shameful peace with the Persians.

The affair of greatest importance was to conclude a solid peace with the Persians, who were much more formidable enemies, both from the strength of their empire, and the superior qualities of their sovereign. After seven years spent in negotiations, which were several times broken off, a peace, no less shameful than necessary to the emperor, was concluded for fifty years. The principal conditions were, that the empire should pay to the Persians a subsidy of thirty thousand pieces of gold; that Chosroes should give up all claims on Lazica, and never grant the barbarians a passage through the Caspian Straits; and that the Romans should not come near any frontier of Persia. A toleration was likewise granted to the Christians, but upon condition that they should not attempt to make any proselytes.

This treaty contained prayers to the Supreme Being in favour of those who faithfully observed it, and imprecations on the violators. Thus, the same God was called to witness by both parties. The two princes wrote letters to each other, in order to ratify the peace. Among the pompous titles assumed on that occasion by the king of Persia, that of *Giant of Giants* appears entirely new. Could any thing lessen its ridiculousness, it would be, that, in comparison of Chosroes, Justinian appeared a dwarf. Peculiarities of this treaty.

It is related that the emperor, not knowing where to find money, applied to Amicia, a lady of great wealth, for a loan. That lady required time, and converted her riches into plates of gold, with which she lined the dome of a church; and, when the work was finished, showed it to the prince, saying, *There is all I am worth, do with it what you please;* upon which Justinian commended her piety, and retired in great confusion. Gregory of Tours, who relates this circumstance with great encomiums on the lady, by his narration furnishes a proof of a kind of devotion then very common, which was equally lavish to churches and monasteries, and indifferent to the necessities of the public.

Though the prince gave evident signs of decay, some factious persons formed a conspiracy against his life; but the murderers were seized when on the very point of putting their attempt in execution. One crime paves the way for another. Three villains, suborned by the enemies of Belisarius, accused that hero of being the author of the conspiracy; in consequence of which, he was stript of all his employments, and kept prisoner seven months in hourly ex- Conspiracy. Disgrace and death of Belisarius.

pectation of death; yet at last he found means to clear himself, and was restored to the emperor's favour, which, however, he did not long enjoy, being prevented by death. Baronius adopts the fable, which is now universally decried, of his losing his eyes and begging his bread.

Belisarius is reproached with extreme weakness for his wife Antonina, the daughter of a charioteer of the circus, who, by her birth, dissoluteness and malignity, may be reckoned a counterpart of the empress Theodora.

565. The emperor heretical. His death.

Nothing was wanting to complete the weakness of the old emperor but falling into heresy, after having been a continual persecutor of heretics; and into this he was drawn by his vanity of dogmatizing. He became a follower and promoter of the sect of the Incorruptibles, who maintained that the body of Jesus Christ, from the moment of his conception, was incapable of change and suffering. This chimera he attempted to establish by an edict; banished the patriarch Eutychius, and some other prelates who opposed his sentiments; and was proceeding to tyrannize over conscience with more violence than ever, when he died in the fourscore and fourth year of his age, and thirty-ninth of his reign.

Opinions concerning him.

He has been represented as a great man by a number of historians, who, doubtless, were dazzled by the splendour of the great events which have thrown a lustre upon his reign. A patriarch of Constantinople canonized him six hundred years after his decease; yet Evagrius, a cotemporary historian, says, that *after he had filled the empire with confusion and disorders, he*

went to receive his punishment in hell! But neither the historian nor the patriarch were proper judges of his state in the other world; it is the business of unprejudiced reason to fix the degree of esteem or censure which he deserves in this.

CHAPTER VII.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE LIFE AND LAWS OF JUSTINIAN.

Anecdotes by Procopius.

THE historian Procopius, who was secretary to Belisarius, sometimes extols Justinian to the skies; but the book of *Anecdotes* is a most severe satire upon him. For which reason, some able writers have thought it falsely aseribed to that author. 'But,' says M. le Beau, 'whoever understands the language in which it is written, and is acquainted with his manner, which is far superior to that of all the Greek authors posterior to Constantine, must plainly discover him in that work.' Without examining this point of criticism, I can lay nothing more instructive before the reader, than the opinion of the celebrated Montesquieu, who expresses no doubt concerning the authenticity of the book.

Montesquieu believes them genuine.

'I acknowledge,' says he, 'that two reasons make me favour the Secret History, the Anecdotes. In the first place, it accounts better for the surprising state of weakness in which the empire languished during this and

the following reigns. My second reason is drawn from a monument still existing among us. I mean the laws of that emperor, in which, during the course of a few years, we see jurisprudence more varied than during the three hundred last years of our monarchy. These variations are, for the most part, in matters of so small moment, that we cannot see what reason induced the legislator to make *them*; if we have not recourse to the Secret History for an explanation, and say that the decisions and laws of this prince were equally venal.' *

Character of his legislation.

We may therefore conclude, that the legislation of Justinian, whatever encomiums may be bestowed upon it by its admirers, is defective in several essential points. For, ordinances that have no fixed permanency, but are variable from one day to another, and consequently dictated by caprice, if I may venture the assertion, are less proper for producing regularity than confusion in society. The only method of establishing order and correcting abuses, is to make the laws simple, clear, unequivocal, and reduce them to the true principles of equity. Had those of Justinian been generally of this inestimable character, why were they endlessly multiplied? Why have they produced commentaries numerous enough to fill libraries?

The Code.

The emperor being desirous of publishing a system of jurisprudence, employed for that purpose Tribonian, a court lawyer, who made a trade of justice, and, besides, was not en-

* Grand. and Decl. of Rom. Emp.

dowed with a genius extensive enough for such a work. The *Code*, which includes the imperial laws from the beginning of the reign of Adrian, and appeared in 529, was a hasty compilation. Besides, the publication of more than two hundred new ordinances made by the emperor, the faults remarked in the first edition made it necessary to give a second in 534, which is that now extant.

The *Digest*, or *Pandects*, which was drawn up in three years, appeared in 533. This was an immense work, in which it was designed to collect and arrange, in methodical order, with amendments, all that was useful in the works of the ancient lawyers, which amounted to more than two thousand volumes. The emperor, when he gave it the authority of law, forbid its being commented. In case of doubt, recourse was to be had to the prince, who was invested with the sole power of supplying the defects, or interpreting the meaning of the laws. He ordered the judges to conform to that given in the Digest, making all other interpretations of no authority, and even forbidding their being quoted. Tribonian, and the other compilers, having had full liberty to change, to lengthen, or abridge the texts both in the Digest and Code, it is not to be doubted that many of the laws or decisions, given under the names of ancient emperors or judges, were considerably vitiated. The Digest.

The *Institutions*, which were published a short time before the Digest, had likewise the force of law. They contain the first principles of jurisprudence, and are much more esteemed than the two other works. The Institutes.

The Novellæ.

Last of all came the *Novellæ*, which, in some instances, are directly contrary to the Code. The emperor seemed often to make laws merely for the pleasure of afterwards altering them.

This system of law grew into disuse.

In the East, this great body of laws subsisted only till the ninth century; when the emperor Basilius substituted the *Basilica* in its stead. In the West, it was first abrogated by the laws of the Lombards, and continued in oblivion till the twelfth century, when a copy of the Digest was found at Amalfi. Thus, the real triumph of Justinian's legislation has been over modern nations, who unhappily were acquainted with it too early and too late; too late, because it would have dispelled many errors which sprung from barbarism and ignorance; too early, because for want of discernment, the good and bad were adopted indifferently. That emperor himself furnishes a strong argument against the utility of his laws, for disorder universally prevailed during his whole reign. However, it must be acknowledged, that in the midst of confusions and dangers, laws lose their efficacy.

Whimsical laws concerning marriage.

I shall conclude with some observations of Montesquieu, because they will instruct us how to reason on matters of such importance. 'Justinian ordained, that a husband might be divorced, and the wife not lose her portion, provided he had not been able to consummate the marriage in two years, which period he afterwards lengthened to three. But in such cases, two years are equivalent to three, and three are no better than two.' * We have here

* Esprit. des Loix, l. 29. c. 16.

a palpable instance of the capriciousness of this legislation.

'The law of Justinian, which made the consent of either husband or wife to enter into a monastery, sufficient reason for divorce, was entirely contrary to the principles of civil jurisprudence. Causes of divorce ought to spring from some impediments, which could not be foreseen before marriage; but the desire of living in chastity could be foreseen, because it is an affection of the mind. This law favours inconstancy in a state, which, by its nature is perpetual. It is inconsistent with the fundamental principle of divorce, which permits the dissolution of one marriage, only in hopes of another; and even if we consider the matter in a religious light, it is only offering to God victims without a sacrifice.' * Whatever this writer says, if we consider the matter in a religious light, the offering may be a real sacrifice; but his reasoning is no less just, so far as it respects the principles of civil jurisprudence, with regard to divorce.

The rescripts ought not to have the force of laws.

'The Roman emperors, as well as our princes, declared their pleasure by decrees and edicts; but what our princes do not, they permitted the judges or private persons, who had differences, to put questions to them by letters, and their answers were called Rescripts. It is plain, that this was a bad method of legislation. Those who in this manner request laws, are no proper guides for the legislator: the facts are always unfairly represented. . . . . Macrinus had resolved to abolish all those re-

* Esprit. des Loix, l. 26. c. 9.

scripts. He could not bear that the answers of Commodus, Caracalla, and so many other ignorant princes, should be regarded as laws; but Justinian was of a different opinion, and filled his code with them.' * The rescripts often contained excellent principles, worthy of being adopted as laws; but it was of the utmost importance to make a proper selection.

Law for enriching the church.

Another law, which might have exercised Montesquieu's critical ability, bears, that if the condition of having children be annexed to a legacy, or other donation, it shall be held as fulfilled on the legatee's entering into the church or a monastery. The ancient legislators had entertained juster notions of the necessity of encouraging marriage; and so strange a novelty was by no means requisite for promoting the real good of the church.

Abolition of the consulship.

In 541, Justinian abolished the consulship, which had long been an office merely titular. The consuls walked in procession seven times in the year, and threw money among the people. This expensive piece of vanity ordinarily cost two thousand pounds weight of gold, part of which was often paid from the public stock, few consuls being able to support the burden. However, some of the succeeding emperors occasionally assumed that title.

The empire still grows weaker.

When we see a vast empire attacked on every side, paying subsidies even to its enemies, exhausted of money, and yet a prey to luxury, in want of defenders, and filled with dissension, it is evident that its ruin draws near, and its last successes are only new symptoms of decay.

* Esprit. des Loix, l. 29. c. 17.

Even victories and conquests increase its weakness; the few great men to whom it owes them soon disappear, and their acquisitions become an additional weight to sink the state.

SUCCESSORS OF JUSTINIAN, TO THE CONQUESTS OF THE SARACENS.

Before we conclude, let us take a cursory view of some events, which will serve to show the decay of the empire, and throw light upon the Modern History.

Justin II. a bad emperor.

Justin II. the nephew and successor of Justinian, a weak voluptary, hastened the destruction of the empire by his silly pride and imprudent absurdities. Narses had governed Italy with sufficient steadiness to restrain the barbarians for thirteen years, but perhaps with too great severity to make his government beloved. The Italians, always inclined to murmur, lamented their being subjected to the government of an eunuch, and regretted the Gothic yoke, which they had been anxious to shake off. Narses was detested by the empress Sophia, who added her influence to the reproaches thrown out against him by envy. Not satisfied with ruining him in the mind of the prince, she insulted him by sending him a distaff and spindle, desiring that he would

come and spin with her maids. The old general, transported with rage, replied, *I will spin her a skein she shall not be able to wind;* and he invited the Lombards into Italy. The deacon, Paul, an historian of that country, gives this account of the fact; and M. le Beau prefers his authority to the objections of a number of critics, who deny it from bare conjecture. Narses died soon after of regret; and his successor, Longinus, the first exarch of Ravenna, was not equal to the task of resisting the torrent which came pouring upon the empire.

568. Conquest of Alboinus.

The Lombards, one of those German nations, which probably sprung from Scandinavia, had obtained Pannonia and Noricum from Justinian, and their king, Alboinus, meditated the conquest of Italy; but being resolved first to secure himself against his formidable neighbours the Gepidæ, he entered into an alliance with the khan or prince of the Abares. He defeated and killed Cunimond, king of the Gepidæ, and married his daughter. Then passing the Julian Alps, easily made himself master of Venetia, which reached as far as the Addua, Adda, and extended his conquests on every side with great rapidity, forming three considerable dutchies, Friuli, Spoleto, and Benevento. Pavia surrendered after a three years' siege, and was made the capital of his kingdom.

What remained to the emperors in Italy.

The Lombards being always bought off, never made themselves masters of Rome. And Ravenna, the maritime towns of Campania, Brutium, the ancient Calabria, in which were Brundusium, Tarentum, Hydruntum (Otranto) and Sicily, were all that remained to the em-

pire. The *exarchs*, like the Persian satraps, governed that country with sovereign authority, but removable at the will of the emperor, to whom they were obliged to pay a sum of money annually. It is already easy to be foreseen, that the *exarchate*, not being able to support itself without assistance from Constantinople, must fall into the hands of foreigners.

Tragical death of Alboinus.

Alboinus rendered himself equally valued and respected by his justice and clemency; and what makes the noblest panegyric of a conqueror, the people whom he subdued were happy under his dominion; but he was deprived of reaping the fruits of his valour and prudence by a tragical death. According to the practice of the barbarous nations of the North, he caused a cup to be made of the skull of Cunimond, king of the Gepidæ, whom he had killed with his own hand, to drink out of at solemn festivals. One day, when he was heated with wine, he presented this cup to the queen, Rosmonda, the daughter of Cunimond, inviting her to *drink with her father*. Seized with rage and horror, she contrived a scheme of cruel vengeance, and proposed to Perideus, a brave officer, to be her instrument, and to assassinate the king; but, not being able to prevail with him, she employed a very extraordinary artifice. The officer having a commerce of gallantry with one of the queen's women, Rosmonda one night took her place; and, after he had gratified his passion, discovered herself, bidding him *choose whether he would kill Alboinus, or die the victim of his rage*. Perideus, dreading the punishment, assassinated the king in presence of Rosmonda.

Clef assassinated. The thirty-six dukes.

Clef, the successor of Alboinus, was detested for his avarice and cruelty; and, after a reign of eighteen months, was murdered by one of his domestics, upon which the Lombard nobility shook off the yoke of the royal authority. For a space of ten years, thirty-six dukes governed each their own subjects, like so many tyrants; and then chose Autharic, the son of Clef, who added to the conquests of their nation. If the dukes had not chosen a king, the Lombards would soon have been ruined by anarchy.

Justin quarrels with the Persians.

At the time that Justin lost Italy, notwithstanding the peace for fifty years which had been concluded by Justinian, he provoked a war with the Persians. He sent ambassadors to conclude an alliance with the khan of the Turks that inhabited the country near mount Altai, at the source of the Irtis. He swore to defend the Persarmenians and Iberians who had rebelled against Chosroes, for compelling them to renounce Christianity; and Chosroes having demanded the pensions that were due to him, haughtily replied, that *he would not* pay them; that if the king of Persia was desirous of his friendship, it was inconsistent to require money, and that he hoped to lower the pride of the Persian monarch, and deliver that country from a tyrant, who was a persecutor of the Christians.

573. He is unfortunate. Death of Chosroes. 576.

War was rekindled, and the Roman army laid siege to Nisibis; but the inhabitants did not deign to shut their gates, and the siege was soon raised. Chosroes took possession of Dara, the bulwark of the empire in Mesopotamia, and Syria was laid waste by one of his generals. Justin, borne down with accumulated

misfortunes, lost his senses. Tiberius, whom he had created Cæsar, a soldier of fortune, yet worthy of the throne, took prudent measures to stop the progress of the Persians. The haughty Chosroes was defeated at Melitine in Lesser Armenia, and saw his kingdom laid waste. He died, and his successor Hormisdas continued the war, which was prolonged under several reigns, till the Saracens began to make conquests; so that the tottering empire received new concussions on every quarter.

Law relating to divorces.

Justin died in the year 578. By one of his edicts,* he repealed the laws of Justinian against divorces made with mutual consent, and gave liberty to married persons to separate as formerly, if they did not agree, and to contract a second marriage. 'Marriage,' said he, 'being entered into by mutual consent, ought to be dissolved when inclinations change.' He added, that he had consented to this law at the request of a great number of people, to prevent poisonings, and to put an end to irreconcileable enmities; so corrupted were the manners, and so difficult was it for the dictates of religion, with regard to the sanctity and indissoluble tie of marriage, to triumph over the influence of vice and custom!

578. Reign of Tiberius.

Tiberius, whose prudent government had already placed the Roman name in a respectable light, found himself possessed of the sovereign authority upon the death of Justin. Benevolent, just, and active, his whole time was dedicated to procure happiness to his subjects. However, not having resolution enough to re-

* Nov. 140.

sist the barbarians, or rather yielding to the state of the times, he was obliged to abandon, to the Abares Sirmium, a place of importance, and the only one remaining to the empire in Pannonia. Their khan even insisted upon being instantly paid three years' pension which was due to him, at the rate of eighty thousand pieces of gold yearly; and the emperor, to preserve peace, was obliged to comply. A victory gained by Mauritius over the Persians, who had defeated him upon a former occasion, did not compensate for this affront. Tiberius named Mauritius his successor, and died after a too short reign. Theophylact says, that the plenty and prosperity of his subjects were his wealth and his glory. He detested the trappings of royalty, and desired to be called the father, rather than the master, of his people.

582. Reign of Mauritius.

Though Mauritius deserved the character of an able general, and possessed the qualities of a good prince, his reign could not restore the affairs of the empire. The Lombards maintained their power under their *kings Autharic* and Agilulf; and the Abares procured an increase of their pensions. After a long series of hostilities, the conquering khan made an offer of restoring the prisoners for one piece of gold a head, and afterwards for much less, but Mauritius refused; and the prisoners, to the number of twelve thousand, were massacred, which, however, did not prevent a peace from being concluded, when twenty thousand pieces of gold were added to the yearly tribute paid to the Abares. Some people accuse the emperor of shameful avarice, while others say that he only refused the ransom from a motive of

revenge, as he had reason to be offended with these prisoners. Whatever was the cause, complaints and universal disgust succeeded.

He is cruelly dethroned by Phocas.

Two years after, Phocas presented himself before Constantinople, at the head of an army of rebels. Having been proclaimed emperor, he caused five sons of the unhappy Mauritius to be beheaded. Mauritius, who was present at the execution, exclaimed, at every stroke, *Thou art just, O Lord, and righteous are thy judgments.* The death of the father closed this bloody scene, which, of the many horrors we have seen, was the most enormously wicked.

608. St Gregory obtains what he desired.

Though Phocas was a monster, and totally void of merit, the pope St Gregory wrote to him in honourable terms, such, undoubtedly, as were prescribed by ceremony, or the interest of the holy see. That famous pontiff, whose zeal and charity did honour to his dignity, had quarrelled with Mauritius about the title of œcumenical patriarch, of which the bishops of Constantinople were ambitious. Justinian had given them that title; and John Peinastes, *the faster*, who was respected on account of his austerities and liberalities to the poor, tried to maintain it, notwithstanding the zealous opposition of the pope, who procured a declaration in favour of the privileges of the Roman church from Phocas, but to which no respect was paid by the Greeks.

Gregory took the humble title of *the Servant of the Servants of God;* which in him was an expression of sincere modesty, and added to the respect paid to his person and dignity. Such was his credit at Rome, that if he had been a less virtuous man, he might have ren-

dered himself independent. This was probably the cause that Phocas showed him such attention; and was likewise one of the reasons of the progress of the pontifical authority.

The Persians take the city of Edessa.

The empire was overwhelmed with every kind of disaster under the reign of this tyrant. Chosroes II. king of Persia, who had been supported by Mauritius against a rebel, became the implacable enemy of Phocas. The Persians broke through every barrier, and even seized Edessa, which the inhabitants alleged had an authentic promise from Jesus Christ that it should never be taken. They laid waste all Asia from the Tigris to the Bosphorus. Chalcedon, which was only parted from Constantinople by the strait, saw them at her gates.

Conspiracy against Phocas.

The cruelty of the tyrant, rather than the public disasters, occasioned continual conspiracies: the horror of his barbarities was increased by a barbarous devotion. He compelled all the Jews to be baptized; but at last Priscus, his son-in-law, whom he suspected, invited Heraclius, the exarch of Africa, *in the* name of the senate, to come to the assistance of the nation.

Heraclius succeeds him.

Heraclius sent his son with a fleet. The port of Constantinople was forced, and Phocas seized and dragged, with his hands tied behind him, before the conqueror, who, exclaiming with indignation, *Thou wretch, how hast thou governed the empire?* he replied, *Do thou govern better.* At these words, young Heraclius flew upon him, and, treading him under his feet, caused him to be cruelly mutilated, and his head cut off in presence of the people. He

reigned eight years, and was succeeded by this same Heraclius, son of the exarch.

611. Progress of the barbarians.

The emperor, though possessed of valour and military talents, sunk into inactivity, which stifled all passion for noble actions, either from the deplorable state of the empire, which prevented his forming any important undertakings, or that a relish for pleasure added to the seductions of grandeur. The little that remained to the Romans in Spain was seized by the Visigoths. The Lombards made themselves dreaded at Ravenna, where the oppressions of the exarchs caused them to be every day more and more detested. The Persians took Jerusalem, and laid waste the country of Egypt. The Abares, having recovered their losses by the enjoyment of several years repose, began to move, and obliged them again to purchase peace.

The distribution of bread discontinued.

We must recollect that Constantine imprudently introduced the custom of distributing bread at Constantinople, which was considerably augmented by Theodosius; but, for want of money, though Heraclius laid a tax upon every loaf, it could no longer be continued. The people murmured, and the emperor endeavoured to retire into Africa, but was prevented.

622. Heraclius defeats the Persians.

His courage was at last roused by the insults of Chosroes II. and the victories of the Persians. He turned all his views and his whole strength on that side, and, having headed his army, was attended with the greatest success for six following campaigns. He procured immense treasures by the pillage of the palace of Dastagerd, to which Chosroes had transferred his residence, because the astrologers

had made him afraid to live in Ctesiphon, his capital. According to an Eastern writer, who exaggerates in the manner of his country, the amount of five thousand millions of French livres was paid annually into the king of Persia's treasury: the jewels alone filled a thousand coffers.

628. He makes peace with Siroes. Chosroes being defeated by the Romans, was dethroned by his son Siroes, who, after having the barbarity to let his father die of hunger, concluded a peace with Heraclius. The two kingdoms preserved their ancient limits, the prisoners on both sides were restored, and the famous cross, which the Persians had carried off from Jerusalem, was brought back in triumph by the emperor.

He disturbs the state by favouring Monothelists. This war was scarcely ended, when he sunk back to his former indolence. He was no longer a hero, but an inactive, effeminate, narrow-minded prince, engaged in subtile controversies at the very time he was losing the greatest part of his dominions. Monothelism tore open the wounds which the Christian world had received from so many different heresies. *It was* always a prevailing madness among the Greeks, who were intractable in their opinions, to dispute about incomprehensible mysteries; to render them more obscure by their attempts to explain them, and perpetually to revive the most dangerous contentions. The Arians had rejected the divinity of the Word to maintain the unity of God; the Nestorians had given two persons to Jesus Christ, to support the opinion of his having two natures; the Eutychians, to maintain the unity of the person, confounded the two natures in one; and, last-

ly, the Monothelites supposed only one will, as they could not conceive two wills to exist in the same person; and this heresy, which it was supposed would reconcile the different sectaries, found a great many followers. Heraclius, united with the patriarchs of Alexandria and Constantinople, published the famous edict called *Ecthesis* in its favour, which was proscribed by pope John IV. in 639. Pope Honorius, deceived by appearances, had neglected this new opinion as of no consequence to the faith; but he very soon saw that it affected even the substance of the doctrines of the church, and, far from conciliating the minds of men, it must have the contrary effect.

The Ecthesis.

While the *Ecthesis* occasioned most fatal disturbances, the empire and Christianity were threatened with a dreadful revolution, which was at no great distance. Mahomet, a native of Mecca in Arabia, of a poor but distinguished family, was bred in ignorance; but, having acquired some idea of the doctrines of Christianity by an intimacy with a Nestorian monk, conceived the great design of founding a new religion and a new empire at the same time. This ingenious impostor and daring enthusiast, having artfully prepared the minds of the people, began, at the age of forty-four, in the year 614, to set himself up as a prophet. He preached to the Arabs, his countrymen, commonly called Saracens, his new religion, which was a compound of Christianity and Judaism, equally the enemy of Christians, Jews, and Idolators, respectable for its doctrine of the unity of God and precepts of charity, but, in other respects, filled with fables and ridiculous superstitions,

Mahomet and his religion.

yet very well calculated to inspire invincible enthusiasm, which bids defiance to danger and death.

Tenets favourable to enthusiasm.

The tenets of the Mahometan religion conduced to this end. The first was, that paradise would be the reward of every believer falling in battle; the other, that the duration of human life was so regulated by the decrees of God, that no precautions to preserve it could avail.

Flight and success of Mahomet.

The new prophet at first met with opponents, and, being obliged to fly from Mecca, took shelter at Medina, where he was protected by some Christians and Jews who were settled there. By his abilities and exploits he united under his authority all the tribes of Arabs who had hitherto been divided and independent, and became their king and their priest.

Hegyra of the Mussulmen.

The *hegyra*, or flight of Mahomet, the famous epocha of the Mahometans, happened in the year 622. Their years are lunar, consisting of three hundred and fifty-four days, eight hours, forty-eight minutes; they are reduced to our reckoning by approximation. If they cut off one in thirty-three of theirs, the difference will be only an anticipation of six days.

War between the Arabs and Romans.

Mahomet, with his Koran * in one hand, and his sabre in the other, laid the foundation of a vast empire. He sent to invite princes and people to receive *Islamism*, the name which he gave to his religion. The governor of Bostra,

* *Al-Koran* signifies, in Arabic, *The Book*, by way of eminence. It contains the precepts and fictions of Mahomet.

a Saracen, who was attached to the service of the emperor, having caused the prophet's deputy to be assassinated, he attacked the Romans. Caled, the most famous of his warriors, whom he called *The Sword of God*, defeated a numerous army with only a handful of soldiers. This was the beginning of a war which lasted more than eight hundred years, so fatal and disgraceful to the Christian name.

632. Death of Mahomet. The Koran.

Mahomet died in the year 632, and the sixty-third of his age, recommending three things to the attention of his friends; to be assiduous in prayer, to drive idolaters out of Arabia, and to communicate the privileges of Mussulmen to all proselytes: and these three points were revered as Divine commands. Notwithstanding the absurdities contained in the Koran, he said, and persuaded his followers to believe, there was not a word in that book which had not been brought to him from heaven by the angel Gabriel. The Mahometan theologians have had keen disputes among themselves to determine whether that work was *created* or *uncreated*. Certainly the author was most successful. He formed heroes, zealous enthusiasts, who, animated with his spirit, rapidly executed astonishing enterprises.

He is succeeded by Abubeker.

He intended his son-in-law Ali to be his successor, as being the most deserving; but, notwithstanding, Abubeker, his father-in-law, was preferred; from whence originated the most violent schism and irreconcileable hatred between the Turks and Persians. The last maintain, that the three first califs* before Ali were usurpers,

* The word *calif* signifies the *lieutenant* of Mahomet. This was the title adopted by his successors, whose royal and sacerdotal power made such progress,

which occasioned great religious disputes. If the Saracens had quarelled among themselves about this point, or about some article in the Koran, undoubtedly they would have had no great advantage over the Greeks; but, in the first fervour of enthusiasm, still poor, and accustomed to a life of hardships, fond of fighting, and closely united by a fanatical religion, they, in some degree, consumed every obstruction like the fire of heaven. *We bring you either paradise or hell*, said they; *you must either embrace Islamism, pay a tribute, or be cut in pieces by our swords:* and they kept their words. In two years time, Abubeker conquered a great part of Syria, and died leaving no property. His daily expense did not exceed two shillings English. The beginning of his will is admired. *This is the last will of Abubeker, made when he was on the point of leaving this world, when infidels begin to believe, when the wicked cease to doubt, and when liars speak the truth.*

Conquest of Persia.

Omar, his successor and imitator, very soon completed the conquest of Syria, but acquired much more honour by pardoning a *villain*, who had been sent by Constantine, the son of Heraclius, to assassinate him. He reduced all Mesopotamia in one campaign; while Amrou, one of his generals, made a conquest of Egypt; and almost all Persia belonged to the Saracens at the time of his death, which happened in the year 644. The conquest was completed the following year by Othman his successor; and the mighty empire of Persia, which had been so formidable to the Romans ever since the time of Crassus, sunk with its last king Isdegerd III. under the superior force of a nation that had

been looked upon with contempt before Mahomet. There it met with the poison of luxury, by which it must have been contaminated sooner or later; but that did not prevent it from adding Africa to so many other conquests. We shall see it penetrate into Spain, Gaul, and Italy, and, in its turn, at last subdued by the Tartars. The whole world is but one theatre of bloody revolutions.

Instances of the fanaticism of the Saracens.

A thousand remarkable events serve to prove the superiority of the Mussulmen over the Romans of the latter ages, whom they defeated in every campaign. I shall quote a few instances. The Saracens fled upon seeing their general taken prisoner in an engagement, when one of their officers exclaimed, *Have you forgot, that, to turn your back upon the enemy, is to offend God and his prophet? What matters it though Derar be taken prisoner? God is living, and sees you.* They instantly returned to the charge, and defeated the Romans.

Before the battle of Yarmouk, which preceded the taking of Jerusalem, one of the leaders encouraged the army by the following speech: *Mussulmen, recollect that paradise is before you, hell and the devil behind you.*

Constantine, in a conference with Amrou, asked him, by what right he pretended to Syria? *The right which the Creator bestows*, replied he. *The earth belongs to God; he bestows it as seemeth to him good for his servants, and his pleasure is manifested by success in war.*

Mahomet condemned a Mussulman for having cheated a Jew, and the Mussulman presumed to appeal to Omar. When he was made acquainted with the fact, he drew his sabre, and,

striking off the head of the criminal, *Behold what the man deserves*, said he, *who rejects the sentence of the Prophet!*

When Omar came to lay siege to Jerusalem, he brought his provision, with a bottle filled with water, and a wooden platter, upon his camel. Having observed some of the Saracens dressed in silk, and other clothes taken from the enemy, he commanded them to be dragged through the mud, with their faces towards the earth, and their clothes torn in pieces.

When Alexandria was taken, Amrou wished to save part of the library; and, having asked Omar's permission, received the following answer. *If the books which you mention contain nothing but what is in the book of God, they are of no use; if they do not agree with it, they are wicked: therefore, give orders that they may be burnt.*

The Roman empire could not resist them.

If we reflect on the voluptuous luxury of the court of Constantinople; on the factions of the circus, which occasioned continual seditions, always protected by some of the princes; on the theological disputes which distracted the minds of the people; on the weakness of the army; the exhausted finances; their meanness, and their ruined morals: we cannot be surprised at seeing the empire fall a prey to the Mussulmen. What men when compared with their enemies! It is fanaticism contending against bigotry.

TABLE

OF

ANCIENT GEOGRAPHY.

A

ACHAIA. Was at first a country of Peloponnesus; but when Greece was subdued by the Romans, the province which they called *Achaia*, comprehended Attica, Bœotia, Phocis, Peloponnesus, &c. with the islands,

ADRIATIC, Sea. The Gulf of Venice.

ÆQUI. An ancient people of Italy, inhabiting the banks of the Anio, at present the Teverone.

ÆTOLIA. A country of Greece on the Gulf of Corinth or Lepanto, at present the Despotat, a part of Livadia.

ALBANIA. A country of Asia, near the Caspian Sea, comprehending at present Sohivan and Dagestan, in which is the city of Darbent.

ALLOBROGES. A people of Narbonne Gaul, inhabiting a part of Dauphiny, and almost all Savoy.

ALPS. These mountains were divided into several parts under different names. *The Cottian Alps*, between Dauphiny and Piedmont, Mount Cenis. *Grecian Alps*, between Piedmont and Savoy, Little Mount St Bernard. *Julian Alps*, between Istria and Carniola in the Austrian dominions. *Lepontian*, in Swisserland. *Maritime*, between Provence and the territories of Genoa. *Norican*, between Bavaria, Tirol,

and Carinthia. *Pennine*, between the Milanese and Valais, Great St Bernard. *Rhetian*, in the Tirol, &c.

AMANUS. A branch of Mount Taurus in Asia, which parts Syria from Cilicia.

ARABIA. A country of Asia, situated between Palestine, the Red Sea, and the Gulf of Persia. The ancients divided it into three parts, as it is at present. 1st, *Arabia Petrea*, upon the confines of Palestine and Egypt. 2d, *Arabia Deserta*, on the north, where the people known by the name of the Nomades dwelt, of whom one tribe was called Saracens, which name afterwards became common to all the Arabians. 3d, *Arabia Felix*, to the south. Its chief towns are Jatripa, Medina; Macoraba, Mecca; Saba, Sanaa.

ARMENIA. The Great Armenia lies to the north of Mesopotamia, called at present Turcomania. Less Armenia in Asia Minor. It was a part of Cappadocia conquered by the kings of Armenia.

ATLAS. A great mountain of Africa, extending from east to west.

ASIA MINOR. At present called Natolia. It comprehended Phrygia, Lydia, Bithynia, Pontus, Cappadocia, Galatia, Ionia, Caria, Cilicia, &c.

ASSYRIA. Beyond the Tigris. Its ancient capital was Nineveh. The other famous cities are Arbela, Erbil, and Ctesiphon, the capital of the Parthians. That country is at present called Kurdistan.

ATTICA. A country of Greece, in which Athens was situated. It is called at present Setine, or Atheni.

B

BABYLONIA, or CHALDEA. Situated on the south of Mesopotamia and Assyria. Its capital, Babylon, which was on the banks of the Euphrates, is destroyed. It has been supposed that Bagdat was in the same place, but Bagdat is on the Tigris. This country is at present called Irak-Arabi.

BACTRIANA. A province of Persia, on this side the

Oxus, the Gihon. It is a part of the country of the Usbeck Tartars.

BALEARES. Islands which were dependent on Spain. Minorca and Majorca.

BÆTICA. A province of Spain, which took its name from the river *Bætis*, Guadalquivir. It comprehended Andalusia, the kingdom of Grenada, and a part of New Castile.

BŒOTIA. A country of Greece, lying west of Attica. Thebes, Thiva, was the capital.

BITHYNIA. A province to the north of Asia Minor. Its chief cities were Prusa, Nicæa, Chalcedon, Nicomedia, &c., called at present Bourse, Isnich, Scutari, Is-Nikmid.

BORYSTHENES. It is the river Dnieper which runs into the Black Sea.

BOSPHORUS of Thrace. It is the strait of Constantinople, by which the Propontis, the sea of Marmora, communicates with the Black Sea. Bosphorus *Cimmerius*, or Chersonesus Taurica, at present the Crimea.

BRITAIN. Great Britain, likewise called Albion, comprehended, as it does at present, England and Scotland. But the Roman Britain, they only reckoned the south part of Scotland with England. Little Britain, called likewise Hibernia, and sometimes Scotia, was Ireland.

BRUTIUM. A part of Italy to the south, where was Crotona, Cosentia, and Rhegium.

C

CAMPANIA. A part of Terra di Lavoro, in the kingdom of Naples.

CANTABRES. A people of Hispania Tarraconensis, in Guipuscoa, Biscay, and Navarre. It was with difficulty they were reduced by the Romans.

CAPPADOCIA. A great country in Asia Minor, bordering on the Black Sea. It formed a kingdom, and Cæsarea was its capital. It is called at present Amazia or Amnazan.

CASPIAN, Gates. Narrow and very difficult passage,

between the mountains and the Caspian Sea, and is said to be near the city of Darbent in Persia. It is now called the Pass of Teflis.

CAUCASUS. A branch of Mount Taurus in Asia, lying between the Black Sea and the Caspian.

CELTICA. See Gaul.

CHALDEA. See Babylonia.

CHERSONESUS. This name was given to several peninsulas. Chersonesus, *Cimbrica*, Jutland. *Taurica*, the Crimea. *Thracia*, Romania.

CILICIA. A southern province of Asia *Minor*, where were the cities of Tarsus and Issus.

COELO-SYRIA. A country of Syria, situated in a delightful valley, the limits are little known. See Syria.

COLCHIS. Afterwards called Lazica. A country of Asia, lying east of the Black Sea. At present called Mingrelia.

COMAGENA. A province of Syria near the Euphrates.

CORCYRA. A Grecian island in the western part of the Ionian Sea, at present called Corfu.

CRETE. An island, in which are reckoned several kingdoms. It is the isle of Candia, in the south of the Archipelago.

CYRENAICA. A part of Africa, which is reckoned at present the western part of the country of Barca.

D

DACIA. A country comprehending Upper Hungary, Transylvania, Walachia, and Moldavia beyond the Danube. Its inhabitants were called Getæ. The Romans having quitted Great Dacia, gave that name to the country on the near side the Danube.

DALMATIA. It was the eastern part of the present Dalmatia and Bosnia, with the western Servia. Its cities were Salona, Belgrade, *Taurunum*, &c.

DARDANIA. Upon the confines of Macedonia, sometimes making a part of Dacia. The same name is given to other countries.

E

EGEAN Sea. At present called the Archipelago.

EGYPT. The ancients divided it into three parts. 1st, Lower Egypt, whose chief cities were Tanis, Pelusium, Canopus, Alexandria. 2d, Middle Egypt, in which stood Memphis. 3d, Upper Egypt or Thebais, where were Thebes, Elephantis, and Syene.

EMILIA. A country of Italy or Cisalpine Gaul, between the Po and the Apennines. It comprehended the dutchy of Parma, and extended to the neighbourhood of Ravenna.

EPIRUS. A country of Greece, at present called Lower Albania. Ambracia, Larta, and Nicopolis, Preveza, built by Augustus after the battle of Actium, were the chief cities.

ETHIOPIA. Lies south of Egypt, and is called at present Nubia and Abyssinia. The most remarkable of its inhabitants were the Troglodites, who dwelt in caverns on the shore of the Red Sea.

ETRURIA, or Hetruria. At present Tuscany, with a part of the Papal territories, lying west of the Tiber.

EUBEA. An island in the Egean Sea, extending along the coast of Bœotia, whose capital was Chalcis. The Euripus parted it from the mainland. It is at present called Negropont.

F

FALISCI. A people of Etruria upon the Tiber. Falerii was their capital.

FIDENATES. A people of Latium, whose capital was Fidenæ.

G

GALATIA or GALLO-GRECIA. A province of Asia Minor, where the Gauls settled. Ancyra was its capital, at present Angouri.

GAUL. Was divided into four parts, Belgica, Celtica, Aquitania, Narbonnensis. 1st, *Belgica*, comprehended the country lying between the ocean, the Rhine, and Mount Vogesus, Voge, to the Seine and the Marne. 2d, *Celtica*, the middle and the greatest part of France. 3d, *Aquitania*, the country between the ocean, the Garonne, and the Pyrenean moun-

tains. These three were called *(comata)* Haired Gaul, because the people wore long hair. 4th, *Narbonnensis*, called *Braccata* from the name of a dress, included Languedoc, Provence, Dauphiny, and Savoy.

Augustus extended Gallia Narbonnensis to the Loire, and new divisions were constantly made. At the end of the fourth century, Gaul was divided into seventeen provinces. Two of Narbonne, three of Aquitaine, three of Lyons, four of Belgia, the Viennenses, the Senones, the Sequani, and others.

As the northern part of Italy was peopled by colonies from Gaul, the Romans gave it the name of *Gallia Cisalpina*, and the country situated beyond the Alps, with respect to Italy, they called *Gallia Transalpina*.

GERMANIA. Comprehended the country between the Rhine, the Danube, the Vistula, and the Northern Ocean, which was called *Great Germany*. The *Less* was a part of Gaul, the near side of the Rhine, and where it was settled by German colonies.

Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and a part of Poland were in Great Germany; but it did not extend so far to the south as modern Germany.

GREECE. The south part of Turkey in Europe. The ancients divided it into six parts, Macedonia, Epirus, Thessalia, Achaia, Peloponnesus, and the Islands.

Great Greece is the southern part of Italy, where the Greek colonies were settled.

H

HELLESPONT. The straits which part Europe and Asia, at present called the Dardanelles. This name was given to the country in Asia, situated upon the straits. The cities of Lampsacus and Cizicus made a part of it.

HELVETIA. A Celtic nation, comprehending Swisserland, except the canton of Bale.

HEMUS, at present Balkan. A range of mountains crossing Thrace.

HERCYNIA, the Forest of. This immense forest covered almost all Germany, and extended from Alsace

and Swisserland to Transylvania. The Black Forest is a part of it.

HISPANIA, Spain. The Romans divided it at first into two parts, *Ulteriora* and *Citeriora*, or Tarraconensis. The first was afterwards subdivided into two provinces, Lusitania and Bætica. See these words. The second into three. 1st, The Tarraconensis Propet, in which were Tarragon, Sarragossa, Pampeluna, Numantia. 2d, Gallicia, in which were Braga, Porto, Lugo, Leon. 3d, The Carthaginian, in which were Carthagena, Valencia, and Toledo.

HYPANIS. A river of Scythia in Europe, called at present the Bog.

HYRCANIA. A province of Persia, to the south of the Caspian Sea, at present Mazandiran, or Tabaristan.

I

IBERIA. A province of Asia, between the Caspian and the Black Seas. The same name was likewise given to Spain, because of the river Ebro, *Iberus*. It is called at present Georgia.

ILLYRIA. This country was greatly extended after the Roman conquests, and divided into eight provinces, which were again subdivided. 1st, Rhætia. 2d, Noricum. 3d, Pannonia. 4th, Liburnia. 5th, Dalmatia. 6th, Illyria Proper, in which are Scutari and Durrazzo. 7th, Mæsia. 8th, Dacia. It was bounded by the Danube, the Lake of Constance and the Rhine, the Alps, the Adriatic Sea, Greece, and Thrace.

INDIA. The ancients knew little of this country but the Western Peninsula, and that which forms a great part of the Mogul's country. It was *India on the near side the Ganges*. The country of the Brachmans beyond the Ganges, towards the source of that river, is the Thibet, or the country of the Lamas. The peninsula of Malacca was called *the Golden Chersonesus*. They included the country of Sina, China in India, which was undoubtedly the south part of China, with Cochinchina and Tonquin.

INSUBRIA. A part of Cisalpine Gaul, inhabited by a

colony of Gauls called Insubres. The capital was Milan.

IONIA. A country of Asia Minor, in which were the cities of Miletus, Ephesus, Smyrna, and others.

ISAURIA. A mountainous country in Asia, on the confines of Cilicia, at present Sauba in Caramania.

ITALY. It was at first only the southern part of the country which is known by that name at present, and was afterwards divided into nine parts. 1st, Cisalpine Gaul or *Togata*, since Lombardy. 2d, Etruria. 3d, Umbria. 4th, Picenum. 5th, Samnium, and the country of the Sabines. 6th, Latium. 7th, Campania. 8th, Magna Grecia. 9th, The Islands. Augustus divided it into eleven provinces, and Constantine into seventeen.

JUDEA. In Asia, at present a part of Souria.

L

LACONIA. In Peloponnesus, the country of the Spartans at present called Maina.

LATIUM. The country of the Latins, Rutuli, Volsci, Hernici, &c. It is at present the Campania di Roma, and the adjacent part of the Terra di Lavoro.

LAZICA. See Colchis.

LESBOS. An island in the Archipelago; at present Meteline.

LIBANUS. A chain of mountains on the confines of Syria and Palestine.

LIBYA. A country in Africa; at present Barca.

LIGURIA. At present the coast of Genoa, part of Piedmont, Montferat, and the Milanese, on the south side of the Po.

LUCANIA. A part of Magna Grecia, in which was Sybaris, Roscianum, Rossano, and others.

LUSITANIA. A province of Spain between the Douro, the Guadiana, and the ocean. It comprehended almost all Portugal, with a part of the two Castiles.

LYDIA. A country of Asia Minor, in which was Sardis.

M

MACEDONIA. Situated between Greece and Thrace.

The Turks call it *Makidunia.* Its principal towns were Pella, Jenitza; Thessalonica, Saloniki, &c.

MAURITANIA. A part of Africa to the south of the straits of Gades, Gibraltar, to which the Romans added a part of Numidia. The whole was divided into three provinces, which comprehended the kingdoms of Morocco, and the western part of Algiers.

MEDIA. A province of Persia to the north of Babylon; at present Irak-Agemi.

MESOPOTAMIA. A province of Asia between the Tigris and the Euphrates, in which were Edessa, Nisibis, Carrhæ, Singara Atra, &c.; at present Diarbeck.

MESIA. This country answers at present to the Eastern Servia, and the Western Bulgaria.

MESSENIA. The country of the Messenians in Peloponnesus, to the west of Laconia.

N

NORICUM. A country lying between Italy and the Danube. A part of the circles of Bavaria and Austria.

NOVEMPOPULANIA. In Gaul, which is at present Gascony and South Guienne.

NUMIDIA. Before the times of the Romans, this part of Africa was of great extent, but dismembered by them to enlarge Mauritania. In the time of Augustus, it was no more than the east part of the kingdom of Algiers.

O

ORCADES. Islands on the north of Great Britain; at present the Orkneys.

P

PALESTINE. See Judea.

PALUS MEOTIS. At present the Sea of Zabache, or Asoph, which communicates with the Black Sea.

PANNONIA. A province of Illyria, to the south of the Ister, Danube, comprehending a part of Austria and Hungary. Its cities were Sirmium, Sirmich, Vindobona, Vienna, and others.

PARTHIA. The country of the Parthians to the east of Media. It makes a part of the Khorassan.

PELOPONNESUS. A great peninsula joined to the rest of Greece by the Isthmus of Corinth; at present the Morea.

PERGAMUS. The capital of a kingdom of the same name in Asia Minor, where formerly was the kingdom of Phrygia.

PERSIA. That was the name given by the ancients to the country lying beyond the Tigris, as far as the Indies. Persia, properly so called, *made one province*, as did Media, Parthia, Bactriana, &c., which answers to the present Persia, and to a part of the country of the Usbeck Tartars.

PHASIS. A celebrated river of Colchis in Asia; at present Rione or Fache.

PHENICIA. A country in Asia. It was a narrow coast between the Mediterranean Sea and Mount Lebanon, at present comprehended in Souria.

PHOCIS. A country of Greece, lying west of Bœotia, in which were the city of Delphos, Parnassus, and Helicon.

PHRYGIA. A country of Asia Minor, towards the Hellespont, in which was the famous Troy.

PONTUS. A part of Asia Minor, on the coast of the Black Sea. It was the kingdom of Mithridates.

PONTUS-EUXINUS. At present the Black Sea.

PROPONTIS. A gulf between the Hellespont and the Black Sea, called at present the Sea of Marmora.

R

RHÆTIA. The west part of Illyria. It is the country of the Grisons, a part of Tirol, Suabia, and Bavaria.

RHODOPE. A mountain in Thrace, almost parallel to Mount Hæmus, which crossed a province of the same name.

RUTULI. A people of Latium. Ardea was its capital.

S

SABINI. A people of Italy, whose country answers to la Sabini in the Papal territory, reaching to the far-

ther Abruzzo. It had in its Cures, Vescovio, Reate, Rieti, &c.

SAMNIUM. The country of the Samnites, among whom the Marsi were reckoned. At present it is called Abruzzo in the kingdom of Naples.

SARMATIA. The ancients divided it into Sarmatia of Europe, and Sarmatia of Asia. That of Europe is between the Vistula, the Danube, the Black Sea, the Tanais, and the Riphean mountains, containing Poland, Russia in Europe, and Little Tartary. That of Asia was what is at present called Kasan, Astracan, and Circassia.

SCANDINAVIA. In north Germany, containing Sweden and Norway; likewise called Scandia, and Baltia.

SCYTHIA. The northern part of Asia, at present called Great Tartary, in which the ancients placed the Asiatic Sarmatia. The eastern part they called Serica, which reached to the south as far as the country of the Brachmans, and to the Sinæ, that is perhaps northern China. *Little Scythia* was in Europe, lying at the mouth of the Danube.

SICAMBRI. A famous people of west Germany, who, with other Germans, formed the league of the Francs.

SOGDIANA. A province of Persia, lying between the Oxus, Gihon, and the Jaxartes, Sihon. The capital was Maracanda, at present Samarkand.

SYRIA. That part of Asia which the Romans called East Syria, was at first divided into Syria, Phenicia, and Palestine; after which they made new divisions. The first part was subdivided into five provinces. 1st, Syria Proper, in which were Antioch, Seleucia Emesa, towns situated upon the Orontes, the Assi. 2d, Comagena. 3d, Osroene. 4th, Palmyrena. 5th, Phenicia Damascena, formerly Cœle-Syria, where stood Damascus and Heliopolis, Balbeck.

T

TANAIS. At present the river Don, which runs into the sea of Asoph.

TAURUS. A chain of mountains in Asia, of which the branches had different names.

THEBAIS. A country in Upper Egypt, towards Ethiopia. Its capital was Thebes.

THESSALIA. A province of Macedonia, on the south of that kingdom, from which it was separated by mountains, at present called Jannæ.

THRACIA. At present Romania and the Western Bulgaria. In the time of the Roman emperors, it was divided into six provinces. 1st, Thracia Proper, near to Macedonia. 2d, Rhodope. 3d, Europa, in which was Byzantium. 4th, Hemimon. 5th, Mæsia Secunda. 6th, Little Scythia, near the mouth of the Danube.

THRASIMENUS, the Lake of. At present Perousa.

V

VENETIA. A country inhabited by the *Galli Venetes*, containing the state of Venice, a part of Mantua, the Milanese, and Ferrara. Mantua was one of its cities.

VOLSCI. A people of Latium. They had the towns of Anxur, Terracine; Arpinum, Arpino; Cassinum, Mount Cassino.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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